

Welcome to my tenth issue of *Diplomacy World*. I apologize for being about a month late on this thing, but we've had a lot of goings-on here in Hickory. After a lot of complications, our son was born a month early, on February 4. Little Wilson Wallace Hood was actually not so little, coming in at seven pounds even though five weeks early. I assume his size contributed to the complications. But, at any rate, mother and baby are now doing fine, though little Wilson broke his collarbone on the way into the world.

Now that I've explained the delay, let me say that the deadline for next issue is a bit quick: April 1. I'm going to try to publish the issue during the month of April, then put #71 in July orso. As always, I would love to hear from new writers out there who have not yet joined our team. The strength of *Diplomacy World* has always been its bullpen of contributors, so let me hear from you about specific story ideas or general writing interests.

We've got a couple of good contests this time, so I hope everyone will participate. In addition, you cynics check out my review of the new Deluxe Diplomacy set that appears on page 16. The issue is rounded out by an excellent interview with Pete Gaughan and a complete description of the Maelstrom ratings. Please remember that we need your feedback about articles you see in *DW* and those you wish to see but haven't. This is the only way we can determine if we are serving our market as we should.

There are some good articles already prepared for next issue. Mark Fassio has written another tactical piece called "Just Passin' Through", Stan Johnson chimes in with his views on playing France, and Conrad von Metzke discusses postal play in "The Postal Gambit". This, together with another interview, more variants and the demonstration game should round out issue 70 quite nicely.

I have prepared promotional flyers for you publishers out there to help me increase the subscription base of the magazine. However, recent events have delayed my sending these out. As soon as I have a spare moment, you will receive these flyers in the mail. I hope you will see fit to publish these ASAP, as I would like to complete this promotion before I start to look for a successor to my editorship of the zine.

Yes, you heard that right. I don't plan to publish *DW* in perpetuity, though I am not anywhere close to handing it over right now. There are still some things I want to do with the zine before then, but some of you out there need to mull this over. I truly do not have a long list, or even a short list, of people whom I believe to be qualified and/or have the time to perform the job adequately. Choosing a new *DW* editor is a long-term project, so I am prepared to spend a long time doing it. If you have any interest in becoming more involved in the production of the magazine so you can determine where your interests lie, please contact me as soon as possible. And if you

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Hobby News

January saw the release of the latest listing of hobby members in North America, called the 1993 PDO Census. This publication is compiled by Doug Kent (54 W Cherry St #211, Rahway NJ 07065) and costs, I believe, one dollar. The list is comprised of subscriber lists from postal Diplomacy zines, this year a total of 47 zines in all. Though not all zines responded, and the list by its very nature does not count the tournament crowd and Email folks, it is clear that the numbers have diminished from previous years. I believe this is partially due to continued competition with computer games (which is why Email Dip is the growth area of the future, I believe) as well as poor recruitment through face-to-face events. With the new Deluxe Diplomacy set and hobby flyer, as well as encouraging signs that some hobbyists are seeing the need to put on Diplomacy events in their local areas, I am optimistic about the future.

One interesting side note is that Doug is offering a matrix showing which people on the list are subscribing to which zines. I have not yet ordered this thing, but I intend to because it sounds fascinating.

Shaun Derrick has put out a new publication designed to promote tournament Diplomacy on a worldwide scale. His *International Diplomacy Yearbook* lists tournament results for events held around the world, not just in 1992 but also in previous years. It is an interesting compilation to see what

kind of tournaments there have been, and when. The meat and potatoes of the thing is a person-by-person listing of results in all tournaments included. There are also assorted editorials and stuff by Shaun throughout. Shaun is single-handedly trying to promote international face-to-face play, so I encourage you to write him for more information. (313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry, England).

Looking for a game opening in Diplomacy, variants or other games? Phil Reynolds has done a fine job in publishing the game openings zine *Pontovedria*. (USF#4286, 4202 Fowler Ave, Tampa FL 33620). For \$3.60 per year you can keep up with all openings, or single issues are available for a self-addressed stamped envelope. This is a much more complete listing than the one I put in the back of *Diplomacy World*, so I encourage you to try this out, particularly if you are looking to play a certain variant or non-Diplomacy game.

I was disappointed to read in the latest *Y Ddraig Goch* that Iain Bowen is cutting back on his very fine zine. *YDG* is one of the best international zines out there, and may be the best from England. The strengths of the zine have been Iain's writings and the lettercol, both of which are going to be pared down in the next several months as a cost-savings move. I'm not going to print his address since he is cutting trades and sending away subscribers, but when he bounces back in the fall I will let everyone know so they can write in for a sample.

Another bad thing about all this is that Iain is not coming to this year's DixieCon after all. Iain and fellow Birt Denis Jones were a big hit last year, after making the trip back in 1990 when World DipCon was held at DixieCon. Of course, there are lots of other folks coming to this year's DixieCon, including Vince Lutterbie, Gary Behnen, Michael Gon-salves, Jack McHugh and the normal load of locals and Baltimore Mafia. A flyer is posted elsewhere on this page for your convenience.

And, of course, this is only one of many Diplomacy events we have to look forward to this year. Joel Klein has a flyer elsewhere in this issue concerning a new event in the Chicago area. Eriz Ozog and Bob Acheson have talked about having events in Seattle and Edmonton, respectively. Here is a list of the events that have settled dates and sites:

- AtlantiCon** June 18-20 Baltimore, Maryland
Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway 5-V, New York NY 10034
- PoolCon** June 18-22 Marshall, Missouri
Vince Lutterbie, 1021 Stonehaven, Marshall MO 65340
- Origins** July 1-4 Ft Worth, Texas
Andy York, Po Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148
- AvalonCon** Aug 5-8 Somewhere in MD
Jim Yerkey, 4 Dutton Ave, Catonsville MD 21214
- CanCon** Aug 6-8 Toronto, Ontario
Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ont M6N 1P6
- DipCon 26** Sept 3-6 San Mateo, California
Pete Gaughan, 1521 S Novato Bd #46, Novato CA 94947
- Vertigo Games** Sept 3-6 Paoli, Pennsylvania
Brad Wilson, PO Box 126, Wayne PA 19087

Plans are underway for the 1993 DipCon to be held in conjunction with PacifiCon this Labor Day Weekend. See the newsletter *DipConversation* elsewhere in this issue for a discussion of the scoring system to be used. To keep abreast of all details concerning the North American Diplomacy Championships, stay in touch with Pete Gaughan, address above.

In the review of the new Deluxe Diplomacy game on page 16, some mention is made of the new hobby flyer that appears on the back page of the new rulebook. The flyer is one of the main recruitment avenues we have into the wider Diplomacy hobby, so significant effort has been put into developing a recruitment network that can serve the hobby for years to come.

Based upon the suggestions of Rex Martin at the 1992 Dipcon, as well as input from various publishers in attendance there, we decided upon a 5-person network of "Contacts" through which new players would all be channeled. Inquiries will be answered by sending a packet of information put together by John Caruso called "Diplomacy Introductory Publication", or DIP for short. It contains general information

about the hobby, and lists various people to write for more information on certain topics, include the Variant Bank, Zine Bank, and novice publications like *Masters of Deceit* and *Supernova*. There is also a coupon page for dollars off subscriptions to zines like DW and publications like the *Zine Register*. There is blank space on the last page for personal comments from the five Contacts, each of which is in a different region of North America. Some of the Contacts (who are John Caruso, David Hood, Cal White, Gary Behnen and Don Del Grande) are also including a copy of a "Club and Tournament Diplomacy" flyer put together by Buz Eddy that lists upcoming Cons and related information.

All together, this represents a positive step forward in the development of a more professional, efficient approach to an important hobby issue. Perhaps individual hobbyists can build upon this foundation by developing structures for better hobby promotion to the outside world, and better coordination among Diplomacy tournament organizers.

On that last note, you may remember the "North American Team Tournament (NATT)" idea that was floated a few months back by Jim Yerkey and David Hood. The basic deal here is that zines or local clubs can sponsor a "team" of players at each of the hobby's tournament events. Though the scoring system has yet to be worked out, the individual results of each team member would go towards a team result for the year. Team members would not need to attend more than one tournament, but teams that send at least a few members to each tournament will come out ahead in the rankings. The intent here is to promote face-to-face play and encourage the publishers to send their readers to tournaments. More details on this idea will appear in the next issue of *Diplomacy World*.

DIXIECON VII

The Premier Diplomacy Gaming Event on the East Coast

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**May 28-30, 1993
(Memorial Day Weekend)**

This three-day event draws the best players from the South and beyond for a three-round Diplomacy tournament and other competitions. On Friday night, May 28, players congregate for unofficial gaming and general fun, with the real Diplomacy action beginning the next morning. Players in two of the three Diplomacy rounds will be eligible for awards. During the Saturday night round, Con participants can enter the Variant Diplomacy tournament for a touch of variety. Tournaments in other games such as Titan, United, Miniatures and 1830 will proceed throughout the weekend also. Dixiecon was the site of the 1990 World Diplomacy Championships.

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****For More Information Contact: David Hood, 2905 20th Street NE, Hickory NC 28601****

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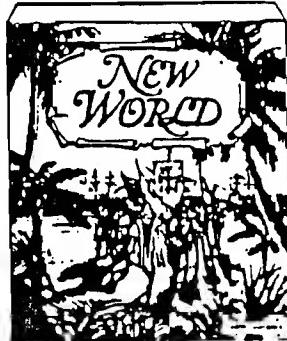
The good! You lead your nation in an exploration of the New World!

NEW WORLD

Bursts onto the gaming scene in plenty of time to celebrate the quincentennial of Columbus' voyage of discovery. Two to six players represent colonizing European powers plotting the exploration, settlement, and exploitation of the New World. Players vie with each other for the richest territory—shipping crops and gold home to finance their expansion. In the process they must deal with

\$25

native uprisings, storms at sea, harsh climates, and the incursions of their neighbors anxious to stake out a claim on valuable territory. The Discovery version wherein players must flip hex tiles as they enter new areas even adds the element of chance as players must strike out into uncharted areas not knowing what rewards or dangers that area holds.



REPUBLIC OF ROME

A diplomatic game for three—six players in which each represents a faction of influential Senators vying for the Consulship of Rome—and all the power, wealth, and influence that entails. Naturally, each faction opposes the others, but must also court the others to get what it wants. Consequently, the "you-scratch-my-back, I'll-scratch-yours" of modern day politics is much in vogue, but the

\$38

game holds far more than that in store as it hurls a bewildering array of temptations and dangers before the players in the form of 192 cards depicting all the events of the ancient world. The result is a fascinating four hour trip through time as players relive the 250 years of the Roman Republic from the tremendous struggle against Carthage to the assassination of Julius Caesar.

The ugly! You maliciously apply an assortment of "legal" holds against opponents in Wrasslin'!

WRASSLIN'

A quick-playing game that pokes fun at Pro Wrestling while remaining a surprisingly accurate simulation of the mayhem that occurs between the turnbuckles. Players have their pick of 24 individually rated, fictional grapplers—half "good" guys and half, well, you know. Each can play an assortment of holds on his opponent based on his current ratings for Strength, Agility, Stamina, Skill,

\$20

and pure bulk. The result is a more "realistic" view of what happens in the ring than actually takes place there most of the time. Not to say that everything is above board; "bad guys" with managers can distract the referee to allow illegal holds or restart pin counts. Matches can be over in five minutes or last upwards of an hour. Tag Teams, Handicap matches, and Battle Royals allow any number to play.



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The One-Dot Grab

by Mark Fassio

We've read now in a couple of recent issues of *Diplomacy World* that stabbing an ally/neighbor for one dot is not the smartest thing to do. Our own esteemed editor mentioned his bad turn of luck at DipCon 25 when he tried it. And General John McCausland (doubtless a person of deep military background, much like "Colonel" Sanders) intoned against such a method in issue 65, stating that even experienced Dip players "who should know better" try the tactic. I feel it's premature to close the book on one-dot stabs, given that I'm one of the chowderheads who still try such maneuvers after all these years.

Granted, one-dot stabs aren't the most rewarding of options, and if there is a chance to get more from your buddy, then by all means that should be your goal. After all, we're all members of Overeaters Anonymous when it comes time to "gobble up" adjacent centers of your neighbor(s). But sometimes grabbing one dot isn't all that bad; and sometimes it's necessary for your own peace of mind.

Let me give you a couple of examples on both instances mentioned above. In one game my Turkey gobbled up one Austrian center from Joel Klein, a person I consider an excellent Dip player. Normally, you'd seek counselling if you tried to grab one center from a still-strong, previous ally who is capable of bloodying your nose for such a heinous act. But as I've said in many articles, each game is different, and the dynamics involved should determine your course of action - not cut-and-dried Accepted Tactics. (Robert E. Lee bucked conventional wisdom by dividing his troops at Chancellorsville and won a smashing victory.)

Some of the game dynamics that should influence your choices include the personality and expected reaction of both the stabbee and relevant neighbors. One reason my one-dot stab against Joel worked was because that Russians were pretty much in Civil Disorder and thus unable to flank me. Also, the Italian was more than willing to grow at Austria's expense.

It might even be said that doing such a small-scale stab is preferred at times, because it doesn't overly alarm the board. Joe Blow getting one dot (and expected to fight ad nauseum against the stabbee's remnants) excites no great fears from the rest of the board. But Joe Blow's devastating stab that nets him three or four in the out-years is rightfully viewed with alarm and a possible "stop the guy" reaction. The Soviets (and other big-name despots) usually tried "salami tactics", going for incremental grabs, versus the "whole shebang." At times, this is the best route to do for your blade-wielding, too.

The second reason for the one-dot grab (peace of mind) sometimes surfaces in a solid alliance, or an alliance of convenience. As you approach the out-years, you and your "blood brother" ally may end up racing for centers in a mutual effort to smash your opposition. But as you both approach the finish line, you may see that, instead of a 17-17, your ally could make it 18-16 and a win instead. A small demonstration of force, (i.e. sailing a fleet to an unguarded coastal province) is sometimes effective in underlining your commitment to the alliance. You can always say that a real stab would have been for more than just one piddly center.

This move can also ensure that you stay in the neck-and-neck running for the finish. A lot of times your ally will realize that it would entail a heckuva battle to redress the grievance of your one-center stab, and that perhaps it's not worth the effort - especially if there are hostile targets to his front who'd be willing to help the one who stabbed him.

Truthfully, such a move could also enrage the ally/victim, and could cause full-scale war. But if so, so what? The object's to win anyway, and you now have *causus belli* to go to war with the guy whose center you took. If he's not willing to understand your concern over possibly being left out of a close draw, then he deserves the stab anyway! not only that, but oftentimes you'll be able to enlist those countries on the "I'm going to die" list and have them now puppet for you in the hopes of wreaking revenge on at least one of the Monoliths that hurt them. You can thus play for either a continued alliance or for solo victory from the same one-dot grab.

As I'll again state, for any stabs (especially smaller ones) you have to consider both your partners and your foes, and how you expect them to react. A lot of times this comes only after months or years of watching them or playing against them in other games. For example, a one-dot stab against a happy-go-lucky player who you've been allies with in other games may not mean squat to him. Then, a similar stab of a "grudge" player, or someone with a short fuse, will entail the replay of the Hundred Years War. When you plan for such a stab, be one with your environment. (Now I sound like someone from an Oregon commune!)

Good players will usually keep a reaction force scattered strategically around their vital areas, even when they have allies. This set of units forms both a deterrent to stabs, and also damage limitation should a stab occur. As such, one-center stabs against a good player are sometimes all you're going to get anyway. So why not do it?

If you plan for the event as well as you would for a multi-center stab, including cementing an agreement with your

neighbors letting them in on what you didn't get, you can often get away with a dastardly one-dot grab and have other vultures flying about the victim's head at the same time. As the old Alka Seltzer commercial used to say, "Try it, you'll like it!"

The above article can be summarized into a couple of salient points (consider these as Cliff Notes in lieu of reading all the hot air above.)

1. The best stab usually nets you a lot of centers at once, but at times it behooves you to go for just one (or two) centers.

2. The stab must be done after a thorough wargaming assessment of your target's personality, expected reaction, and what damage they can inflict if they choose to counter-

attack.

3. Stabbing for one dot without "stroking" your neighbors or offering them future goodies with you is going to ensure you fight a long battle against the person you hit - and quite possibly your neighbors, who now see you as a possible "endangered species."

4. Immediate writing to the guy you hit (if it's an alliance and Peace of Mind hit) is strongly recommended, at the least to plead your case. It won't get you back into complete good graces, but it will go a long way towards justifying your move, regardless of your true intent.

>Mark Fassio (CAD-B, Unit 26708 Box 5265, APO AE 09235) is Strategy and Tactics Editor of DW.

England's Sweden Strategy

by Kevin Brown

Funny thing about playing England. It seems that you always start out in the same position. Fall 1901 has just been completed and you're sitting with A Norway, F North Sea, and F Norwegian Sea. France has sent his fleet down into Spain and Russia hasn't moved north. How many times before have you been here? How many times have you waited for Germany or Russia to tell you what to do with your pieces?

If you're like most players, the answer is "Too Many." But this common position is not one that requires a passive yes-man England. Don't let them tell you where to go, you tell them where you're going. Where is that, you ask? Simple: you are going to Sweden.

The move to Sweden can be effective against either Russia or Germany. The first thing to consider is whether Sweden is occupied. Obviously if Russia is in Sweden then you will need German support from Denmark to take it. This should not be difficult to gain. Tell Germany the whole plan: along with A Norway-Sweden, you will be moving F Norwegian Sea-Barents Sea and F North Sea-Norway (using your new build to cover North Sea.) With your friendly German's support you can not only take Sweden, but also be in a position to take St Petersburg in the fall.

If Sweden is unoccupied (presumably due to a standoff), you should have little problem getting Russian support into the province. In this case the F Norway-Sweden would be accompanied by F North Sea-Skaggerak (or to Helgoland Bight if you're particularly bold) and either F Norwegian or your newly built fleet to North Sea. Then in the fall, you can take Denmark with two supports and Russia can slip into Sweden right behind you. With A Denmark, F Helgoland, and F North Sea, you will have a tremendous tactical advantage over Germany. With the fleet in Skagerrak instead of

Helgoland, the advantage is not as great, but still considerable. If France or Russia can spare an army, Germany should go down in short order.

You don't want to give away your strategy to whichever one you decide to hit. You can always solicit support from both Russia and Germany into Sweden, and then decide which to hit. Even if Russia has Sweden at the end of 1901 you can still go through to hit Germany. Russia should be happy to have the army out of Norway, particularly if he's involved in the south. In that case, when the Russian fleet is dislodged it can retreat to Baltic Sea and help support you to Denmark, thus demilitarizing Scandinavia for both sides. The key thing to remember is that your move to Sweden can be made to look good for both Russia and Germany. When I first tried this strategy at DixieCon two years ago, both Russia and Germany supported me to Sweden in Spring 1902!

This strategy is not without its downside. If you go after Russia your gains will be limited to Sweden and possibly St Pete. A sustained attack into Russia would leave you very spread out and vulnerable if Germany or France turns traitor. If you move against Germany you leave your northern flank very open to Russian aggression (particularly if you moved to Helgoland rather than Skaggerak.) In either case you will be vulnerable to a French attack; you should make quite sure that France is an ally before attempting this maneuver.

There you have it: an uncommon answer to a common situation. Just a little decisive action is all it takes to change England from a solid, boring defensive power to a fluid, exciting dot grabber. Next time you play England, tell yourself to go to Sweden.

>Kevin Brown (100 Patton Drive, Warner Robins GA 31093) publishes the United soccer zine *Pilot Light*.

Pushing the Right Buttons

by Paul F. Glenn

What do you do against really aggressive players? I'm assuming you don't view yourself in that light, but you're concerned with how to get your share of wins, as well as some enjoyment. Where reputation is concerned, it's a decided advantage to froth a bit around the mouth, projecting fear and aggressiveness. It does work. But what if you don't see yourself in that image, or don't want to?

It doesn't take a board full of such players to dominate and define a game: look at the current DW Demonstration Game. There appears to be a committed AI understanding. As for the rest, it looks like a free-for-all. Aggressiveness and shifting relationships constitute the operating mode. Why isn't the AI alliance carrying the day? Too many players are seeking the same short-term result: get centers if possible, and prevent any one player from getting too big too fast.

The latter is taking higher priority than alliance structures. Fighting under an "idea" like that, loyalties change easily, long-term coordination is less attractive, and centers change hands with difficulty. When won, they aren't secured by the glue of trust. Further evidence is the viability of all seven players in that game for so long in the game. With the same immediate goals, there's little room to conduct diplomacy outside of immediate center count.

Consider a more typical postal game. There's more opportunity to deal based on differences between players. The postal dimension just cries out to us to expand the pool of satisfaction beyond the next center you seek.

So you want to win, or place well? Alright then, can you assume everyone else wants to do exactly that also? Really? Which players have you asked? What about the fellow who can tolerate slow growth yet criticizes lying loudly? The player who has no regard for tactics or strategy, shows little interest in learning either, and aches instead for a "press war"? Or even the fellow who wants to win, but is waiting for the first excuse to martyr himself against an attacker?

You have 3-4 weeks per season and freedom from prying eyes. Use it! Learn something about your fellow players, maybe even ask them outright what is important to them. See how they respond. What's to be lost? At worst, you're no worse off than when you wrote. But if they talk in terms that don't mesh with yours, well, you've got something you may be able to deal, and not make it center for center negotiation.

This can be a lot of work. With creative combinations you can throw obstacles in the way of stronger and aggressive players. This isn't "balance of power", it's "balance of interests." The best defense really is persuasion. Consider that they may be faced with a "cooperate or die" ultimatum from

a ten-center gorilla, while you offer something more palatable. Maybe they'll like your style and buck superior odds. As long as they know what they want and you help them gratify it, well then, in exchange they might just help you "persuade" the sharp boys to pay attention.

When should you try this? The early and middle game. There's a strong likelihood of players still around who aren't solely concerned with "outcomes" and might trade position and assistance for a good time. By the Endgame, there are too many people all concerned with the next center, so creative proposals are less likely to bear fruit.

Here are some different interests that a player may have - it's your job to determine which button to push: (1) press, (2) revenge, (3) sense of personal honor, (4) experimentation, or loose cannon, (5) friendship, or cross-game relationships, (6) urge to do things own way regardless of outcome, (7) urge for elegant or clever plans, (8) winning, (9) humor.

I'll illustrate with an example. In a particular game, I played Russia, and none of the players had been known to me previously. Five of the others did know each other, quite well, and made no secret of it. I consider the following interests identified above dominated this game: (2), (5) and (6). Here is how Spring 1901 went:

- A: A Vie-Bud, A Bud-Ser, F Tri-Alb
- E: F Edi-Nwg, F Lon-Nth, A Lvp-Yor
- F: F Bre-Mid, A Par-Bur, A Mar S A Par-Bur
- G: F Kie-Den, A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie
- I: F Nap-Ion, A Ven-Tyl, A Rom-Ven
- R: F Stp-Bot, A War-Gal, A Mos-Ukr, F Sev-Bla
- T: A Con-Bul, A Smy-Con, F Ank-Bla

Then came the following Fall/Winter moves:

- A: A Bud-Tri, A Ser S F Alb-Gre (A Tri)
- E: F Nwg-Nwy, F Nth C A Lon-Bel (F Lon, F Lpl)
- F: F Mid-Por, A Mar-Spa, A Bur-Bel (F Bre, A Par)
- G: F Den-Swe, A Kie-Hol, Ruh S A Yor-Bel (A Mun, Ber)
- I: F Ion-Eas, A Tyl-Vie, A Ven-Tri (F Nap)
- R: F Bot-Swe, F Sev-Bla, A Gal S A Ukr-Rum (A Stp)
- T: A Bul-Rum, A Con-Bul, F Ank-Bla (A Smy)

This developed into an AIR assault on Turkey, taking him out in 1903. England never fully committed to Germany, and they were ineffectual against France. In 1902-3, England took Sweden; Russia and England fenced in Scandinavia; Russia and Germany fought in Silesia/Baltic; and AIR freely

exchanged centers for tactical need. This cooperation induced a voted AR draw in 1906, reflecting a collapse of resistance and will (we had 14 centers between us, and Italy had 4.) As far as other, non-win factors are involved:

(5) Cross and prior-game relationships were clearly working here. From the beginning FI were "known not to fight each other", and Germany was concerned about that. The German and Turkish players were buddies, and the others knew it. So what happened? Italy fought France, and Germany didn't press an attack on Russia to bail out Turkey.

(2) Revenge. Italy's move to the Eastern Med amazed me. In Winter 1901 he told me how the Turk had stabbed him in another game, so he was real happy to do this. And the Turkish player confirmed it. This interaction had a profound effect on the game, as the Italian was very agreeable to ideas that didn't interfere with Turk-bashing, and the pressure on Turkey with my Austrian alliance freed me to meddle in Scandinavia and in Germany.

(6) On the urge to behave a certain way regardless of outcome, France plodded on against EG, enlisting no help that I know of. Germany stuck to his initial impression of FI togetherness and stuck with England despite the latter's colorless moves. The German player believed he had no choice but to continue to pursue his course. The English player was distracted with pressures of his personal life. This lack of time for the game had its toll: static warfare. For my part, by the time AI had patched things up and invaded Turkey, I was set up to go the distance with them (whether or not we got a draw. I'd gotten enough gratification from the game to accept that.)

Hard work doesn't get you there. The Turk and I were the most active players in the game. The Turk clearly wanted to win, and would do whatever it took to get there. Bad luck for

one of us, considering the lack of ambition in the EFG theatre. Reminds me of the NFC Central and East Divisions: weak sisters win the Central, while an 11-5 record in the East barely gets you into the playoffs.

I might add (9), humor, to this. I didn't act with much humor in this game. Both the Italian and Austrian MUST have had a sense of humor, to convert a 1901 attack into a free and trusting relationship, with the Italians in Trieste and the Austrians in Venice. I think the Italian was the most satisfied player in the game. He told me how much fun he was having and what a great pair of allies he had in me and Austria. Well, there's a fellow I can satisfy by playing thoughtfully, win or lose, and there's nothing better than satisfying other players (even enemies). Else who's going to play the game?

Satisfaction is what this is all about. A homogenous board, as in the current DW Demo Game, puts a premium on cleverness, tactical skill, and outright deception. A heterogeneous board, as is the case in many play-by-mail games, introduces the unpredictability in opponents' personalities, skills, and interests, thereby providing a basis for expanding our satisfaction.

The flip side, or course, is to examine your own needs. I've entered some games with plans having nothing to do with winning and the results have not only amused me, but I've also been successful, better often than when playing only for the win. Bizarre openings, just because I felt like it, stimulated my own game, as I saw how others would respond to an apparently "reasonable" neighbor behaving unreasonably. Give it a try - we may all enjoy it!

>Joel Klein (326 N Cuyler, Oak Park IL 60302) will be running the Diplomacy event at the Chicagoland Boardgaming Championships this spring.

J U D G E

For Sale - A program to allow you to gamemaster Diplomacy games...

- * runs on IBM or compatables under DOS 3.0 or greater
- * supports vga, ega, cga or mono graphics
- * this software is error free and is used by many gamemasters
- * easy to use - menu driven interface
- * note: this is not a play-against-the-computer game, but is for gamemasters
- * prints results to either printer, disk, or screen
- * adjudicate 1-100 games concurrently - with ease
- * excellent for p-b-m or p-b-email

Send you check for \$30.00 to: L. Casey
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 Merivale Depot
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(allow 3 weeks for delivery)

To: All Diplomacy Hobby Members

18 January 1993

From: Dave McCrumb, Hobby Awards Chairman

Subject: 1993 Diplomacy Hobby Awards (Deadline - 1 April 1993)

I would like to take this opportunity to request nominations for the 1993 Diplomacy Hobby Awards. These Awards are designed to recognize those individuals who have contributed to our hobby during the past year. This as an excellent opportunity for you to show your appreciation for someone that has helped to increase your enjoyment of this hobby. All it takes is a few minutes of your time, but the recognition received by the nominee will be greatly appreciated.

Nominations are being requested for the following awards: (Please list the reason you have submitted your nomination. For the Walker Award, a copy of the article would be appreciated.)

Don Miller Memorial Award for hobby service. This is normally considered the most prestigious award. Past recipients have included some of the hobby's most distinguished members. The recipient should be one who has made a major contribution to the hobby in the past year. Ineligible: John Caruso, David Hood

Rod Walker Award for literary excellence. Designed to recognize the best article written and published within the past year, this award may be given for an individual or collaborative work. Ineligible: Garrett Schenck, Mark Berch

John Koning Memorial Award for outstanding play of Diplomacy. This may be for PBM, PBEM, ftf, or tournament play during the past year. Ineligible: Gary Behnen

Melinda Holley Award for general participation in the hobby. This award is designed to recognize those people who make this hobby so enjoyable and functional year in and year out. Ineligible: Kathy Caruso, Melinda Holley

Send all nominations to: David McCrumb, 3636 Oldtown Road, Shawsville, Virginia 24162 USA

Nominations in each category will be screened by a committee to reduce the list to five finalists in each category. These five finalists will then be presented to the Diplomacy hobby, with votes being solicited from each hobby member in each category. The recipient of each award will be announced at the 1993 DipCon meeting in California during September. [In the past, there have been frequent complaints about the quality of the five finalists in certain categories. Each time this has occurred, only five nominations had been received for that particular award. If you would like to see more quality nominations on the final list, make a few yourself.]

Hobby members may make as many nominations as they desire. The only restrictions are that the winner of each award is ineligible to win that particular award the next two years, and the chairman of this committee is ineligible for all awards. While members of the Selection Committee may not nominate each other for any awards, other hobby members may. If this does occur, that member of the committee will not be permitted to vote in that category.

As with all awards, this one cost money. I would like to request a one dollar donation from each participant to help defray costs. If you can not, or do not feel compelled to do so, then don't. Your nominations, and later votes, will still be greatly appreciated. The quality and integrity of these awards will continue as they have been established by the previous Chairmen. If that means coming from my own pocket, so be it. I took this task with that in mind.

Two new Contests for 1993

by Fred Townsend

The line from St. Pete to Spain is the key to midgame and endgame in Diplomacy. Any alliance, particularly a southern one, must break the St. Pete and MAO bottlenecks. If the southern alliance fails to get a fleet past these two choke points, St. Pete can be held from the north with two pieces and MAO with three. Add a piece in Denmark and eight centers in the north can be held against an alliance of the remaining 26 centers!

The contest here is to find the *least* number of pieces and centers that can hold a stalemate line.

To enter, specify which centers are owned, what moves will hold them, and who else is still in the game. You must have at least two opponents, each with no more than 17 centers. And assume that your opponents will not attack each other for the 18th center necessary for a win. That is the point of a less-than-17 center stalemate line, after all. It forces superior opponents to fight each other or include you in the draw.

Oh, and no civil disorders.

For example, the eight-center position described above could be submitted as follows:

Eight centers, six pieces. Two countries eliminated. England owns Home, St. Pete, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Portugal. Germany and France have been eliminated, and there is no I-T-R-A fleet in the north (or army in England or Scandinavia.) A Fin S A Stp, A Den H, F Nat S F Mid, F Por S F Mid.

More details may be necessary for complex stalemate lines. In case of a tie, the solution with the least number of countries eliminated wins.

It can definitely be done with less than eight centers. Your challenge is to determine how much less. Submit your answers to me at 65 Wimbledon Rd, Lake Bluff IL 60044 by April 1, 1993. I will describe the results in *Diplomacy World* 70.

Oh, the winner of the contest will receive two free issues of *DW*, while the second and third place finishers will get a free issue each.

>Fred Townsend (65 Wimbledon Rd, Lake Bluff IL 60044) is one of the commentators for the current *Diplomacy World* Demonstration Game.

by Mark Fassio

Happy 1993! I hope Santa was good to all of you, and that 1993 will turn out to be your best year ever!

The next "big" event will be the Super Bowl, and you can bet there will be at least one person rooting for the Steelers to win the whole thing. (Of course, I'm typing this in December, so I'm really going out on a limb by playing psychic.) ((I think the limb broke - ed.))

Small talk aside, David Hood and I want to announce a contest for the readership and any other interested party that may hear about it. The idea for a contest came as I assumed the mantle of S&T Editor. I know many of you from mutual games over the years, and have seen articles from others among you. I feel that the readership is a vast pool of untapped writing talent, and I'd like to see some of you "show your stuff" and submit items for inclusion in the zine.

(Rumors that I'm doing this to lessen my own load of writing requirements are, of course, profoundly untrue.)

Contest Background: We want a Dip-related article from you. Any subject is fine, as long as it pertains to Diplomacy. While I naturally lean towards S&T articles, the field is wide-open - articles on variants, "best Dip memories", ratings systems, etc. are encouraged. If it's Dip-related, it's a competitor.

David and I will rate the submissions and award prizes to the three best articles. First place is \$40 and two free issues of *DW*. Second place gets you \$10 and a free issue, while third place still nets you that free issue. As we'll already have the other entries, I can envision publishing just about all of them over the course of subsequent issues. It may even be possible to publish a special issue of *Diplomacy World* featuring the contest entries.

But I'll leave that decision to our esteemed editor.

Deadline: Send the articles to me by April 1, 1993. I'll rate them and forward all entries to David for his review and final scoring. Winners will have their articles published either in #70 (April) or #71 (June/July).

OK, 'nuff said. Hope you like the S&T articles of late, and don't hesitate to write me about any S&T-related question, comment, or critique. I'd love to hear from you. Until next time...

>Mark Fassio (CAD-B, Unit 26708 Box 5265, APO AE 09235) is the Strategy and Tactics Editor of *Diplomacy World*, as well as a really swell guy.

Travel Fantasy Contest - Answers

by Conrad von Metzke

Last issue we published a listing of zine names that have followed the hobby tradition of naming after fictional places. Pete Gaughan and Stan Johnson came the closest to getting all twenty-four sources correct, so each will receive a free issue of *DW*. As for the rest of you, look and *learn*.

Albion This one is cheating; Albion is a medieval Latin names for a real place, namely England. It is used mostly poetically these days.

Atlantis Yep, it's the same one, the supposed "lost continent" in the east Atlantic first mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*.

Barad-Dur The Tower of Sauron in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*.

Barataria Sancho Panza's island in *Don Quixote*, by Cervantes.

Barsoom Edgar Rice Burroughs' fictitious rendering of the planet Mars.

Brobdinag The Land of the Giants from Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. The supposed locale is off the coast of California, which in effect makes this a fictitious rendering of another fictitious place, the legendary Isle of Calafia.

Costaguana Joseph Conrad's hotbed of Central American intrigue in his novel *Nostromo*. (Pete put this one in Europe, so he only gets a half-point.)

El Dorado Origin unknown. It was supposed to have been a City or Land of Gold, possibly in the American Southwest, for which many early Spanish explorers went hunting.

Erewhon Spell this one backwards. It was invented by novelist Samuel Butler for what amounts to a satire of Utopian novels.

Frobozz The Underground Kingdom in the series of computer games called "Zork", written by an ex-hobbyist named David Lebling.

Graustark Central European nation invented for a novel of intrigue written by James Barr McCutcheon, though I cannot remember the name.

Lemuria Two possibilities here. Pete identified this from a series of sword-and-sorcery novels by Lin Carter. This is also

a lost continent, this time in the Pacific, that has taken on mystical meaning and spawned a mysterious group called the Lemurian Fellowship, which seems to be one-third Masonic, one-third Rosicrucian, and one-third UFO believers.

Lilliput Again from Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, this time the Land of the Little People.

Marsovia Yet another Central European grand duchy, full of romance and intrigue, this time from the Marx Brothers' film "Duck Soup".

Mongo The planet of the evil Ming from the Flash Gordon movie serial.

Osgiliath City and land from Tolkien's saga.

Perelandra C.S. Lewis' conception of Venus in a trilogy of loosely theological sci-fi novels.

Pontevedria It's Central Europe again, folks; this time from the operetta "The Merry Widow" (Franz Lehár).

Ruritania Er... yep, another Central European point of intrigue, from the best-known novel of the genre, Anthony Hope Hodgson's *The Prisoner of Zenda*.

Saguenay In effect, the equivalent of El Dorado to Canadians. The name comes from Indian mythology, and there is evidence that the Indians told the tale to early explorers so the latter would keep going and not settle in Indian territory.

Slobbovia I haven't been able to pin down an actual source for this yet, except that this was the generic name we gave, as kids, to any obscure, distant, seedy little place of no particular importance, kind of similar to Timbuktu or Outer Mongolia. However, it must come from some source, because it cropped up in the hobby, in New York, entirely without my input.

Talabwo A fake Black African dictatorship, along the lines of Gabon or Dahomey, from Donald Westlake's comic detective novel *The Hot Rock*.

Trantor The planet of the Imperial Capital from Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy.

Wild 'N' Wooly Now, this one I don't know on my own, but Rod Walker has assured me it is a planet featuring prominently in one or more sci-fi novels by Poul Anderson.

A Gridlocked Diplomacy Map

by Fritz Juhnke

Garret Schenck, in the letter column section of *Diplomacy World* #66, posed an interesting mathematical question. Can one, he wondered, draw a map topologically equivalent to the Diplomacy map subject to the following two conditions:

- 1) All borders between regions must have unit length.
- 2) All angles between these borders must be multiples of sixty degrees.

In other words, he wanted to shoehorn the Diplomacy map into a grid of equilateral triangles. He speculated that it could not be done. After numerous hours of idle doodling, I have proven his hypothesis to be incorrect. One counter-example is shown here. (I regret to note that poor Portugal, the problem child, is once again deprived of breadth and made to sustain itself on length alone.)

The purist may object that the external borders of the map are greater than unit length. Ideally each country with N neighbors should have a border of length N, counting the edge of the board as a single neighbor. But while this condition is necessarily met for internal regions, it is both unrealistic and impossible to realize for the regions on the edge of the map. The expectation is unrealistic because each border region would presumably gain several new

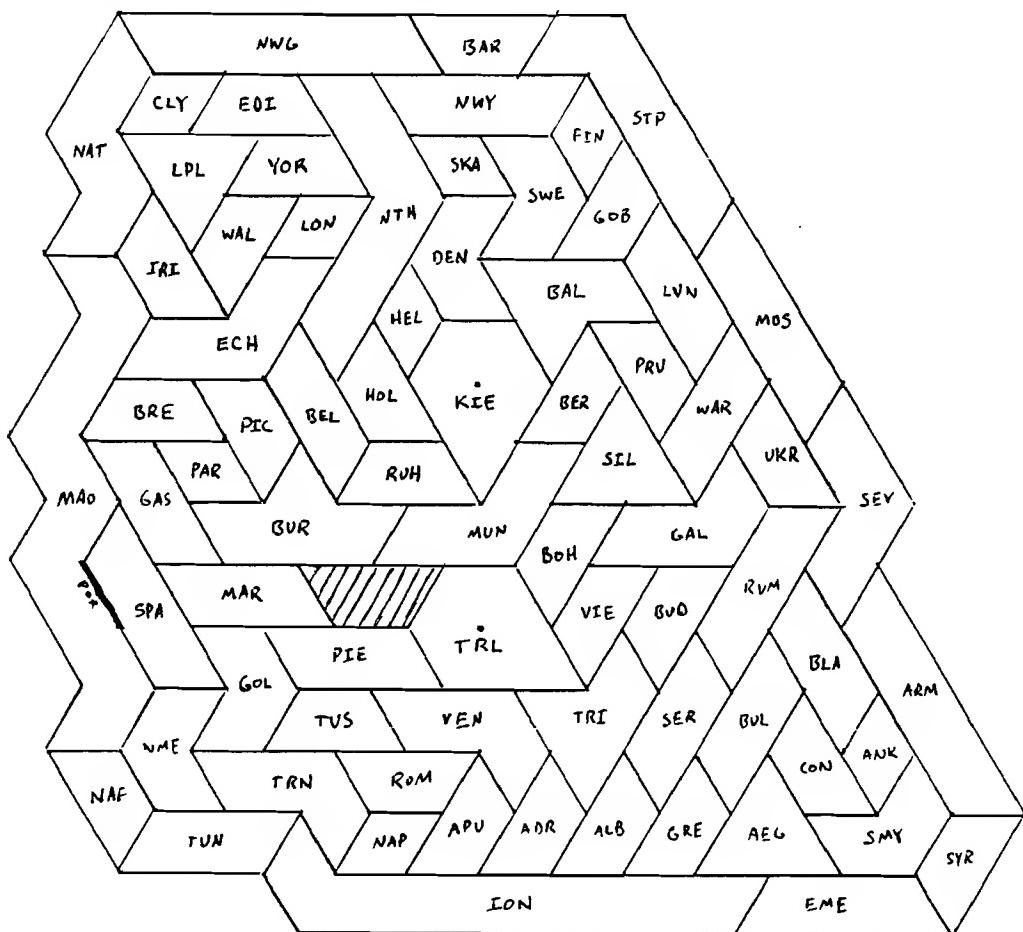
neighbors, and not just one, if the map were extended. It is impossible because 75 regions simply cannot fit into a map with an edge of length 13.

The flaw in my map which I feel most keenly is the disproportionate area of Kiel and Tyrolia. All the other internal regions enclose $N-2$ triangles, where N is the respective number of neighbors. Sadly, Kiel and Tyrolia each have seven neighbors but enclose seven triangles instead of the allotted five. I would be grateful to any of you math junkies out there who could rectify the situation. To state it another way, I would like to add a third condition:

- 3) No region's interior may contain a lattice point.

This puzzle has afforded me great amusement, but, alas, I can see little practical value in the end result. As with the Idealized Map I presented in DW 64, there is form and beauty with little function. This failing must, I suppose, be accepted philosophically. It is the perpetual lot of the pure mathematician to suffer such disappointments...

➤Fritz Juhnke is currently in the Peace Corps, and can be reached at Peace Corps, PO Box 362, Mbabane, Swaziland.



Land Bridge Diplomacy III

by Lee Kendter, Jr.

This variant may be used by any publisher. I only ask the courtesy of being notified of the opening, as I would love the chance to play my game.

Version III is a major overhaul of the game that adds multiple bridges, several new spaces, and removes Switzerland and Corsica as supply centers.

1) All the standard rules of Diplomacy apply except as modified below.

2) All starting units are armies, and only armies can be built. Austria starts with A Zara, not A Trieste.

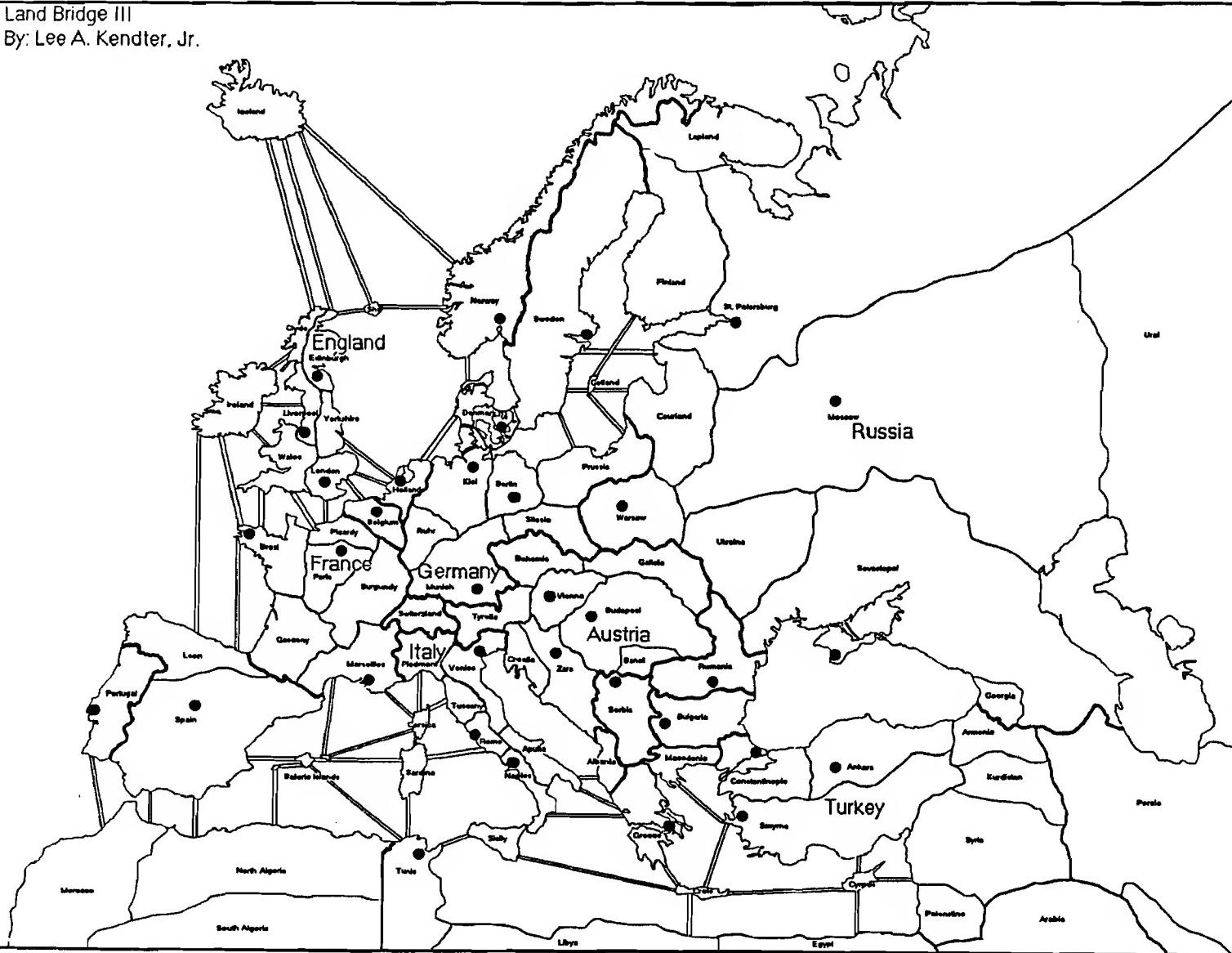
3) Units may move, be supported, and retreat over any land bridge. Seas may only be crossed at land bridges. All seas are impassable.

4) Map notes: Croatia does not connect to Vienna. She = Shetland Islands. Naples does connect to Sicily. Switzerland is passable.

>Lee Kendter, Jr. (376A Willowbrook Dr, Jeffersonville PA 19403) publishes the zine *Get Them Dots Now!*, and is custodian of the North American Variant Bank.

Land Bridge III

By: Lee A. Kendter, Jr.



PDORA Financial Committee Newsletter #3 1992

January 19, 1993

Greetings once again! I've tabulated all the votes from you Financial Committee members, and the results are in. Below are the amounts I have sent to various hobby custodians:

<u>Hobby Service</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>	<u>Amount Approved</u>
BNC - Vince Lutterbie	\$270	\$223.33
MNC - Lee Kendter, Jr.	\$50	\$50.00
Orphan Service - Eric Ozog	\$100	\$100.00*
NAVb - Lee Kendter, Jr.	\$30	\$30.00
Pontevedria - Phil Reynolds	\$48	\$48.00
PDO Zine Directory - John Caruso	\$103	\$68.66
Totals	\$601	\$519.99*

Two notes. First, I sent the BNC funds to Vince, after checking with Gary Behnen. Gary will be turning over the BNC to Vince next month, so to make things simple he felt Vince may as well open up a BNC account now. Second, although Eric Ozog was approved for \$100, he has asked that I only send \$50. Thanks to outside donations, Eric doesn't see the need for the entire \$100 anymore. The other \$50 will go back into the PDORA funds for next year. An update of PDORA finances appears below:

Previous Balance (12/14/92)	\$763.64
Plus 1992 Bids Still Due	\$167.00
Less Funds Distributed	<u>\$469.99</u>
Approximate Carryover	\$460.65

I still expect to receive all (or nearly all) of the late 1992 bids. Three parties still owe money, all of which have expressed their eagerness to pay shortly. There is still one shipping expense to reimburse to a donor, so if the money all comes in we'll have quite a large carryover. Even if a portion doesn't come in, we've got a minimum of \$300 on hand.

Finally, one of the Financial Committee members has expressed an interest in being replaced. I'll be hunting around for a replacement, but if I can't find one the party in question says he'll stay on for another year. That should do it for now - expect to hear from me in March confirming that each of you wishes to continue as a Financial Committee member. Till then, happy stabbing!

PDORA Financial Committee Members: Robert Acheson, Steve Arnawoodian, Don Del Grande, Steve Heinowski, Michael Lowrey.

A Review of Deluxe Diplomacy

by David Hood

Perhaps the most important news on the novice front in years is the just-released new version of Diplomacy here in the United States, called Deluxe Diplomacy. We cannot attract more novices to the game if the game is not available for purchase, so the impact of producing and selling a new Dip game cannot be overemphasized.

The initial reviews from certain members of our hobby have been largely negative of the new product. Let's examine the new game in detail, concentrating on those aspects that are different from the version of Diplomacy sold by Avalon Hill for the last ten years or so.

The Pieces. One of the changes that is most welcomed by most hobbyists is the move back to wooden pieces, in lieu of the plastic stars and anchors used previously. The wooden pieces harken back to earlier versions of the game, with which many hobbyists first learned the game. My own view about the pieces is well known (I believe I'm the only person publically preferring the plastic ones) but I'm willing to bow to the hobby majority here and count this as a plus.

One change about the pieces I am not enthusiastic about is the inclusion of stickers to affix to the pieces. These take the form of little flags of each country, and come in two sizes to fit both the shorter armies and longer fleets. This is not a bad idea in principle, but at least my set has stickers that don't stick. Well, not very well, anyway. My guess is that established hobbyists will throw these things away while perhaps some new players will fall in love with them.

The Map. The changes to the map are subtle, but important. One problem with the old map was all the topographic features and upside-down province names made the thing hard to read and, really, unattractive. These problems have been totally solved in the new version, which has almost a completely uniform color and all the names are right-side-up. The province borders themselves have also been redrawn, and done much more precisely. I'm not positive, but I think some of the smaller provinces in England and Italy have been enlarged, or at least that is the illusion.

Of course, Avalon Hill had to mess up an otherwise favorable change by misspelling a province name, badly. Burgundy has become "Burgandy" on the new board! Rex Martin has acknowledged this mistake, and promises a new board once the current production run is sold. Some copy editor or some such person at AH should be executed...

The Rulebook. This is possibly the biggest change from the old Dip set. While there have been a few minor changes in the rules themselves, they hardly warrant mention. The big change is that large parts of the old Gamer's Guide by Rod Walker have been incorporated into the rulebook itself. This gives first-time hobbyists some needed strategic/tactical

guidance about how to play the game, and partially justifies the price increase (more about this later). I believe this is a great idea. In addition, the rulebook itself has been designed much more attractively from a production standpoint.

The inclusion of the Rod Walker material also opened up the possibility of a new Gamer's Guide, which is indeed in the works. Cal White, Gary Behnen and I are responsible for hobby input on this thing, so it is likely to include much about the Diplomacy hobby that was not in the old one. This is another very positive development. Along the same vein, a revamped flyer has been placed on the back page of the rulebook, with the names of five contacts in the Diplomacy hobby for interested buyers of the game to write (Cal, Gary, me, Don Del Grande and John Caruso). The flyer was handsomely produced by Cal, and should prove to be a major benefit to the hobby.

The Extras. The new set has greatly improved conference maps, and a lot of them. The box is longer, and much more striking in appearance. There is a counter tray included with a plastic lid, which should be of some benefit as well. Is the set worth the \$55 pricetag? Well... probably not. But, contrary to some opinions I have seen, the new set is worth something very close to that. There are a great many additional features over the old set, as well as improvements in the preexisting product. If it doesn't sell at that price I am sure Avalon Hill can be talked into lowering it.

North American Hobby Services

Boardman Number Custodian (BNC): Records Dip gamestarts and finishes. Gary Behnen, 13101 S. Trenton, Olathe KS 66062.

Miller Number Custodian(MNC): Records Variant gamestarts and finishes. Lee Kendter, Jr. 376A Willowbrook Dr, Jeffersonville PA 19403. or Brad Wilson, PO Box 126, Wayne PA 19087.

Canadian Diplomacy Organization(CDO): Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ontario M6N 1P6.

Zine Register/Zine Bank: Sends sample zines or list of zines. Garret Schenck, 40 3rd Pl, Basement Apt, Brooklyn NY 11231.

Novice Packet: Tom Mainardi, 45 Zummo Way, Norristown PA 19401, or Bruce Reiff, 2207 Smokey View Blvd, Powell OH 43065.

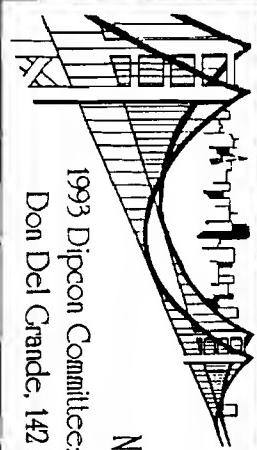
North American Variant Bank (NAVB): Keeps a catalogue of variants available for sale. Lee Kendter, Jr. 376A Willowbrook Dr, Jeffersonville PA 19403.

Pontevedria: A list of game openings. Phil Reynolds, USF #4286, 4202 Fowler Ave, Tampa FL 33620

DIPCONVERSATION #2

News from Dipcon XXVI, San Mateo, Calif. 9/3-6/93

1993 Dipcon Committee: Chairman Pete Gaughan, 1521 S. Novato Blvd., Apt. 46, Novato CA 94947 — 415-897-3629
Don Del Grande, 142 Eliseo Dr., Greenbrae CA 94904; Marc Peters, 370 North Drive, Sun Prairie WI 53590



Hobby News

I expect to publish this March 15, May 15, and July 15.

You can get on our mailing list, or submit your comments for the letter column, by writing to me,

Pete Gaughan, at the address on the masthead.

Minimal stuff this time but next 'issue' expect more!

Letters on Dipcon

Eric Voogd

As for WorldWide Diplomacy at Pacificcon next year, I did play in the tournament you mentioned last year (and won, I might add). Consider yourself warned that the game lasted from 11 A.M. till 12 P.M. and the resolution reached was still rather weak. Any one of 7-8 powers could have won if the game had been prolonged. If you insisted on trying it, perhaps two-man teams with short (10-minute) negotiating periods or something drastic of that sort would be necessary to reach any kind of conclusion. It is an intriguing variant, though. But wouldn't you rather play La Bataille...?

//Deciding on an activity for Dipsters Friday night would be easy if it was left to me—we'd all sit in the hospitality suite and socialize. Those of you who like variants should write in and start pushing your preferences!!

Garret Schenck

Why do S.C.s count when you get a draw, but not when you get a win? I note, with displeasure, that two "medium-sized" two-way draws will easily beat a win and an elimination. Indeed, it's hard to imagine how two two-way draws could fail to beat a win and an elimination—most people aren't about to vote a two-way draw unless the winners have at least 10 centers each, I would think.

This comes up every year. You say the rules are set

in stone and that they've been used before. Fine. At least a little discussion on these points might encourage those who are today creating "regional" cons with an eye to gathering in Dipcon three or four years down the line to think about their scoring system.

I agree with Randy that the system used at Dipcon XXV was the best that has been used at Dipcon in my memory. It was simple and did not reward aberrant behavior. A win and elimination beat two two-ways. S.C.s were ignored except to break ties—I'm willing to use S.C.s for that purpose. And note that if only two out of four games are counted, you certainly do need some mechanism to break ties—and it's likely S.C.s will end up counting for the winners (as they did for this year's Pacificcon, where a 4D/15 beat a 4D/14).

Don't get me wrong. I am pleased that you're not giving solo winners points for S.C.s—this does lead to incredibly poor sportsmanship, where the obvious winner delays his/her win in order to surge to 26 centers. But you shouldn't give S.C. points to anybody—those with two draws should never be able to defeat those with a solo win.

I just do not understand why a 4-center survival will garner as many tournament points as a 4-center 7-way draw participant. Read Eric Brosius' account of his 7-way at this year's Dipcon for a better understanding of why this is unfair. Survivals should get zip—why didn't they stop the leader? That is the essential purpose of Diplomacy—as expressed by Calhamer himself, and as codified in the rules, where DIAS is enshrined as the basic idea—try to win, or failing that, stop anybody else from winning.

My criticisms aside, I am pleased to see that you are publishing the system that you'll be using ahead of time.

I have never understood why most Dipcon organizers are unwilling to reveal how they're going to score the tourney. I have no problem with people "playing the system." They're there to win the tournament, not necessarily to play each game as a separate unit. If you want to play great individual games of Dip, without worrying that somebody's going to stick you in this game because you won yesterday morning, then I would advise not going to Dipcon!

Best of luck in the coming year on your organizing efforts, and let me know how I can help out.

//I was mistaken when I said the system was set. Don Del Grande assures me that he still wants to inquire regarding the tournament set-up.//

John Caruso

It seems to me that two 2-way draws will beat out a win and an elimination. If you wish to have a win and elim to be better than two 2-ways, I suggest you consider a) upping the win bonus; b) dropping the draw bonus; c) lowering the SC score; or d) adding an SC score to winners (impractical given that people may collude to let a winner get 23 SC's).

Here's a suggestion you might consider—have two or three rounds, with the best two rounds applying toward your score. The last round is only for the top seven players, playing for the championship. You'd hate to see someone with two 4-way draws on a lower board nail a win in the last round and win the tourney. this way, the first two or three rounds are eliminators to get to the final board. And as in Olympic diving, the seven best start even for that final showdown. The winner (or best drawer or highest SC count if DIAS) will win the tourney. Just a thought. But it would free up others to go and game as they choose.

Maelstrom Ratings Explained

by Buz Eddy

As many of you know, I recently embarked upon setting up a rating system for Diplomacy, using postal games as a test case. My system is ultimately for use in face-to-face play as well. This article should answer some of the questions I have been asked regarding my system.

For purposes of the discussion to follow, let's use the term "rating" to indicate "current performance evaluation." That differs in concept from cumulative evalution (of which examples would be the Calhamer Points or Bridge Master Points). It also differs from average performance ratings (examples include the Dragonstooth Rating System and batting averages in baseball).

The first task is to develop the assumptions about what it is that we are measuring in a rating system. For the purpose of Maelstrom Ratings, it is assumed that:

- 1) The game of Diplomacy has three possible results for a player: win, draw or loss;

- 2) Replacement play is different from original play, and that only original play should be rated; and

- 3) Winning is a better result than a two-way draw, and a two-way draw is better than a three-way draw.

Ideally, a properly constituted system could forecast results in terms of possibilities. Postal Diplomacy results are not available in sufficient quantity to construct a theoretically rigorous probability model, I suspect, but Fritz Juhnke's article in the last *Diplomacy World* speaks to this point.

As a point of departure, let us look at chess ratings. When I entered organized chess in about 1958 the Harkness system was in use. The formula was $50 \pm 10\%$ the difference in rating. Avpad Elo examined the results under a probabilistic

model and determined that the Harkness system was too volatile and that numbers that most closely predicted stable probabilistic results were $16 \pm 2\%$ difference. That system has survived and spread to international usage.

The difference in rating adjustment in chess allows performance evaluation (results prediction) based on the relative strength of opponents. This is a key promise to any meaningful system. The reasonableness of such an assertion is obvious, but the practical implication is that evaluating a game's results requires evaluation of all of the players' preceding activity.

One peculiar aspect to the game of Diplomacy is that the probability of winning is somewhat affected by the country played. The Maelstrom results using 1600 games as a database stabilizes certain Calhamer Points by country ranging from 18% of available points for Russia to 10% for Italy.

Thus, the four premises upon which the Maelstrom rating system are built are:

- 1) Only results are wins, draws and losses;
- 2) Only original players are rated;
- 3) The strength of the opposition is a major factor; and
- 4) The country played is a minor factor.

The formula is: $(E) = \text{Player Rating} \times 10\% \times (F(E)) \times 1.4$; pot = $(e) + PC(F)$; award = pot/number of winners; winning player = rating - $PC(X) + \text{award}$; losing player = rating - $PC(X)$

Players begin with a rating of 1000. All ratings that computationally fall below 1000 revert to 1000. PC(X) represents player contribution (to the pot) and CF represents the country factor. (For example, Russia's is .18/.143 and Italy's is .1/.143).

As I told Fritz Juhnke in correspondence last year, I don't have the tools to make that mathematically rigorous, but I do feel that the results have a certain validity by sheer intuition.

The results of the nearly 2000 games in the system provide a long array of names and numbers. Presentation becomes something of a concern. As an accountant by profession, I know the danger of "telephone book" listings of data.

So, in the interest of keeping some perceptability to the presentation, I have examined my array and designated the bottom 50% (1001 through 2299) as "Expert", the next 25% (2300 through 3299) as "Master", the next 15% (3300 through 4999) as "Senior Master", and the remaining 10% as "Grandmaster". The following list has "active" Grandmas-

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7500 212th St. SW #205
Edmonds, WA 98026

ters and Masters. There are others in these categories playing, but they did not have results published in *Everything* issues 83-85.

There will be little, if any, publishing of the total list. Rather, publishers will be provided with lists of ratings of players appearing in their magazine. I only see about twelve zines, so the availability of this may be limited for some time. Interested publishers are encouraged to write me for more information.

Grandmaster

Gary Behnen	13522
Randolph Smyth	11536
Russ Rusnak	8205
Kathy Caruso	5648
Pete Fuchs	5404

David Hood

5295

Master

Stephen Wilcox	4457
Edi Birsan	4138
Don Swartz	3990
Nelson Heintzman	3882
Larry Botimer	3791
Ken Iverson	3563
Mark Fassio	3453
Eric Verheiden	3419
Michael Gonsalves	3350

>Buz Eddy (7500 212nd St SW, Suite 205, Edmonds WA 98020) publishes the zine *Maelstrom* and runs the American Diplomacy Register, a listing of completed FTF games.

Why We Can Rate Diplomacy

by Ron Newmaster

Fritz Juhnke, in *Diplomacy World* #68, despairs of arriving at a statistically pure "valid" rating system for multiplayer games like Diplomacy. He does feel, however, that the ratings system used by the chess federation for ranking chess players is statistically valid. However, please note that chess players do not have a separate rating for games they start as white versus games they start as black. Similarly, a Diplomacy player may start a game with any of the seven "colors". His skill rating should not be dependent upon the colors he has played, but instead upon the quality of the opponents he has faced.

One of the difficulties Juhnke alludes to is that there is no opportunity for full round robin play amongst all Dip players where each has a chance to play each color against all other player/color combinations. Life should be so long!

But Juhke's greatest problem is his demand for statistical independence. Statistical independence is an abstract concept useful only when the number of trials is sufficiently large and reproducible. It doesn't have much place in competitive situations involving humans unless they are independantly racing against the clock or striving for the greatest distance. The aspect of reproducability is totally missing from group endeavors. You cannot simply reset the clock, instruct the jury to disregard the witness' emotional outburst and start all over again as though the past events never occured.

A baseball player's batting average does not reflect the won/loss record of pitchers he has faced, and it does not reflect game situations in which he has been called upon to bunt or go for the long ball. It is a single number which conveys a general sense of the likelihood of success based

upon prior experience in roughly similar circumstances.

Is it nevertheless useful? Everyone knows a ball player's batting average when they play against him. Does that effect their behavior during a game? Certainly. Does such changed behavior effect the outcome of the ball game? Certainly. Does such altered behavior effect the player's subsequent batting average? Probably.

I reject Fritz Juhnke's assertion that knowledge of a Dip player's prior game results invalidates the use of subsequent game results for ranking purposes. Does history judge a military leader's skill based solely upon his first battle and no other? In the team game of football, rushing yardage is attributed to the rusher who carries the ball. Should this statistic be kept from the defense? After all, if the eleven defensive players know the average rushing yards of each of the offensive backs, they may "key" on the one with the highest average, thereby reducing his gains for this particular game.

Fiddlesticks, I say. They do so at the peril of being run over by another. It is the same in Diplomacy. Key on the grandmaster and risk being eaten alive by the novice. Just as a football team will make adjustments when they know the defense is keying on a particular player, the veteran Dip player will make adjustments in his diplomacy, alliance structure, and game persona to take into account the opponent's knowledge and perception of him.

I suspect Juhnke's rejection of there being a statistical basis for establishing a fair, equitable rating system is based upon his training in the physical sciences. Much of the laboratory work of observing reproducible events multiple

Ratings

times is to deduce the "real" underlying distribution of probabilistic results. Diplomacy is a game. It is not a reproducible natural phenomenon. It is a game played by mortals whose skills and value judgments change over time. No Dip player will ever be able to play one of more games against all other Dip players. No Dip game, regardless of how structured, can be replayed so as to confirm the outcome of its first "trial".

Perhaps the die-hard statisticians among us are looking for a Dip rating to represent too much. A Dip rating is not a DNA-laden chromosome which will determine a Dip player's result in any particular game he is about to play. If past performance is an indicator of future performance, then I believe a Dip rating is useful.

For example, it may be useful for outside observers in predicting the likely outcome of a particular game of seven rated players. This would be much like a race handicapper's tip sheet. Are the odds even and the payout fair? If all players were truly equal and had the same Dip rating, the impartial observer of the game would not/could not use player strength in his effort to forecast which players would finish "in the money". The gambler would use other factors to decide upon whom to bet. Would I bet on Italy to win? Give me 100-1 odds and of course I will. Would I bet on England or Turkey to be

around for a draw? It depends upon the odds you're giving.

I think Dip ratings personalized to the player are useful only in setting the opening betting line for a particular game between seven players. As such, Buz Eddy's preference toward listing player ratings by the pool (zine) in which they play is an excellent idea. It treats the zine like local gaming club and lets everyone else know who the current club champ is.

Will some people play for ratings? Of course. Will some people game the system? Of course. Some people are insufferably obnoxious about letting you know their IQ scores or SAT scores from twenty years ago! It still comes down to sitting at the table or taking pen in hand, and playing. Those people who embroider their rating on their lapel just add to the burden they carry into negotiations. Those people who say they can do and then show they can do deserve the right to flaunt it as much as they want. Those who do not care about ratings will not care about ratings. Those who are concerned only about ratings will find that the topic is of interest only to those who also care.

>Ron Newmaster (37 George Cir, Mechanicsburg PA 17055) is a prolific postal and tournament Dip player.

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March 27-28
April 3-4
April 17-18

(at Katz Corner School)
(at Games Plus, Mt. Prospect, IL)
(at Katz Corner School)
(at Katz Corner School)
(at Katz Corner School)
(at Paperback Trading Company, Oak Lawn, IL)

The Third Annual Hobby Favorites Poll (for 1992)

Publishers are encouraged and welcome to reprint this ballot, which is free upon request—but an SASE would be nice.

You may not vote for yourself or your works—stop being so egotistical for once and give someone else their due! The top vote-getter(s) in each category will be reported in the final results. Your secret ballot will not be revealed to anyone.

***** SEND BALLOTS BY APRIL 1 TO: Phil Reynolds, USF #4286, 4202 Fowler Av., Tampa, FL 33620 *****

Vote once for each of the following categories. (Multiple votes for a category result in no vote cast.)

1. Recognition for Outstanding Hobby Service (in 1992)

2. Favorite Diplomacy Variant (which you played in 1992)

3. Favorite Player (as GM or against whom you played in 1992)

4. Most Feared Player (against whom you played in 1992)

5. Favorite Press Writer (whose press you read in 1992)

6. Favorite GM (for whom you played in 1992)

7. Favorite Hobby Personality (in 1992)

8. Favorite Feature Writer (whose article or column you read, published in 1992)

9. Favorite Subzine (which you read in 1992)

10. Favorite Playing Zine (in which you played, published in 1992)

11. Favorite Reading Zine (which you read, published in 1992)

12. Favorite New Zine (which you saw, first published in 1992)

13. Favorite Overall Zine (which you saw, published in 1992)

14. Favorite Zine No Longer Being Published (which you have seen)

Circle or enter the appropriate answer

State or province of residence: _____

Age: -20 20's 30's 40's 50's 60's 70+

Number of cons attended in 1992: _____

Years playing Diplomacy: -2 2-5 6-10 11-20 20+

Approximate number of games won: _____

Years in PBM Dip hobby: -2 2-5 6-10 11-20 20+

(Career—FTF and PBM, Dip and variants)
Approximate number of games drawn: _____

Least favorite country to play: A E F G I R T

Favorite country to play: A E F G I R T

Rank from 1 (most) to 6 (least) how important these factors are to you when considering a zine:

____ Appearance ____ Content ____ Frequency ____ Longevity ____ Price ____ Reputation

Rank from 1 (most) to 6 (least) how important these factors are to you when considering to play a game:

____ Game Fee ____ GM's Reputation ____ House Rules ____ Maps ____ Press ____ Type of Players

The Bestest DW Letter Column

This is the ninth installment of the *DW* letter column, a forum for the discussion of the zine and its contents. Please feel free to write in with your comments, particularly of the negative variety, as such criticism is the best way for the *DW* staff to improve and grow. So, tell us what is on your mind.

Fassio's Postal Negotiations Article

Stan Johnson (10 Pine St, Edison NJ 08817): I agree entirely with Mark Fassio's article on the importance of writing in a postal game. In one respect, though, he doesn't give credit where credit is due. Non-writers make one big contribution to a game; they make it easy to decide whom to attack.

New Blood List

Tim Snyder (130 Atherton Hall, University Park PA 16802): Thank you for placing my name on *Diplomacy World's* New Blood list. I've received several responses so far, from interested publishers. I think it speaks to both the popularity of *DW*, and the cohesiveness of the community, that I've been so warmly welcomed as a new player. I hope to continue to play postal Dip; the friendly atmosphere which you and others have created has assured me that it will be enjoyable. I look forward to seeing you at next year's AvalonCon!

Zine Format

Gary Arkoff (9050 SW Scholls Ferry Rd #301, Tigard OR 97223): Do you usually send *DW* in an envelope with a staple in the corner? If so, thumbs up! Quite easy to read - the printing was very clear.

Editor: Actually, I usually do not put the zine in a separate envelope, but instead simply put three staples around the outside and send it through the mail upright. Adding the envelope would push the weight to the next postal charge, which would not be conducive to making this thing break even. I do put in envelopes those going out of the country, and those going to armed forces personnel. If I have game correspondence or other material going to a particular subscriber, I also use an envelope for that. I've had a few copies get destroyed by the Postal "Service" doing it this way, but I think it's worth it to save money.

Hobby News

Gary Arkoff: Although the information in Hobby News about Cons was very important, I think that it would have been easier to read in table format. As it was most factual, it was ill-suited to paragraph form. Alternatively, it could be

presented in a standardized format with factual information in headers and other comments underneath. By the way, do you know of any Cons coming up in the Pacific northwest?

Editor: Well, I'll think about this, but my personal preference is the paragraph format for most news items. There are other lists of Cons around, including the excellent one in Buz Eddy's *American Diplomacy Register* mailings. See his article this issue for the address. As for the Pacific northwest Con, write to Eric Ozog, who has been making noises about putting such a Dip event together in the Seattle area. (905 209th Ave E, Bonney Lake WA 98390) There are a great many Dippers up there, and DipCon 1985 was held in Seattle, so I believe the ground is ripe for a yearly Con. Remember, everyone, it doesn't have to be big. Just holding a 14-person tournament in your local area will help this hobby to continue growing.

Johnson and Glenn on Playing Germany

Gary Arkoff: I really liked the articles about Germany in *DW* 68. I hope this is a series, and that I haven't missed many!

Editor: While I don't have a specific series going on about play of each country, such articles make up the bread-and-butter of our strategy and tactics fare. Mark Fassio did an excellent article on Turkey several issues back, as did Lamy Botimer on playing England. Kevin Brown has a piece about England in this issue, while next issue will include a Stan Johnson piece on France.

Computer Diplomacy

James Bailey (8337 LaRiviera Dr, Sacramento CA 95826): I wanted to pass along to your readers the fact that the Atari ST version of *Diplomacy* contains several major rules bugs. I have written Avalon Hill about this, but since yours is a hobbywide publication, I thought this might be the best way to spread the word until a fix of the program is implemented. Since the Amiga version uses the same architecture, it may also have the same flaws, but I'm not sure.

The main reason I'm writing is that I've been trying off and on for a couple of years to write a program to play *Diplomacy*. This fall I got serious and made a concerted effort to get it done. I am only writing a text-based program in BASIC for now. By the early Spring I expect to have a version ready that would arbitrate moves and provide printed game reports. Anybody interested in a copy for the Atari ST can contact me. Also, if there are any computer wizards out there interested in trying to convert the program to the Amiga, Mac or PC can contact me for a listing. It's written in GFA Basic, which is very similar to Quick-Basic for the PC. If someone

is interested in wading through 3000 plus lines of code, let me know. When I get the arbitration version smoothed out, then I plan on tackling the small task of creating an AI routine for computer play.

Editor: As a first step, you should contact Email editor Eric Klien to talk with him about the programs that already exist to adjudicate Diplomacy games on the networks. Also, there is an ad from Les Casey elsewhere in this issue. When you are ready to discuss your work on the AI program, please let me know as that would be an excellent topic for an article.

The Zine in General

Mark Fassio (CAD-B, Unit 26708 Box 5265, APO AE 09235): Not to swell your head, but I really enjoy DW! The articles are all very good, and last issue's "Hun" entries by Stan Johnson and Paul Glenn were prime examples of well-written pieces. You mix-and-match topics and themes very well, and the end result is a magazine "smorgasbord of choice" for the Dip enthusiast. Keep it up!

Paul Glenn (1134 W Loyola Ave Box 1005, Chicago IL 60626): You seem to be very willing to advertise new zines in *Diplomacy World*, so I figured I'd tell you about mine. It's called *Innocalated City*, it costs 35 cents or one stamp per issue, and has no game fees. I'll be running two games of regular Diplomacy - I'm not planning on doing anything big at first. If you could put that information in your next issue, I'd be most appreciative.

Editor: No, but I will put the info in this issue. <grin>

David Smith (5038 Boca Raton, Garland TX 75043): As I related to you in an earlier letter, I was a subscriber to DW many years ago; I read my last one in 1981. I thought the quality was excellent back then, but the sample you sent me surpasses those of my day. It's good to see the hobby is still in such capable hands.

Editor: Oh, boy, now I will get mean letters from Conrad von Metzke and people like that, saying the old DW was the best DW...

James Bailey: Even though I'm new to the hobby, I don't feel lost because *Dip World* has already filled in most of the blanks for me. The variety of topics covered in the two issues I've seen has given me an overview that is very helpful while I'm getting started. I'm already involved in a game in *Perelandra* and am waiting for starts in *Lemon Curry* and *Rebel*.

The Hobby in General

Luca Barontini (Via Marradi 103, 57125 Livorno, Italy): I am

organizing international games of Diplomacy in my zine *Mondo Diplomatico*. I would be very happy if Americans, Canadians and Australians decided to play with us.

About our hobby in Italy, I can say that the first zine began its activity in 1972 and sixteen zines total have run postal games. We have organized 78 matches of which 55 are finished, 9 not valid, and 14 still to finish. We currently have four zines, with mine being the oldest (November 1983). I've arbitrated 28 matches of Diplomacy and 2 of my variant Dark Diplomacy. The umpires founded the Associazione Italiana Diplomacy (AID) in 1984. If a player wants to play postal Dip, he contacts the AID secretary, who collects subscriptions and assigns matches to zines.

A convention is organized in Italy every year. This year the convention took place in Verona, Romeo and Juliet's city, where many enthusiasts of all kinds of games can play face-to-face. No representative of AID was present, so no Dip tournament took place. I hope to organize a large Dip event in 1993 in Padova at PAD-CON.

Editor: Glad to hear of Dip doings in Italy! I do not believe that the Italian hobby has until now enjoyed much contact with other national hobbies. I would particularly encourage you to work on setting up a number of Dip face-to-face events around the country as this is the key, I believe, to a growing hobby. Also, I hope that interested readers will sign up for international games in Italian zines so that the contacts between our hobbies can be widened.

Davide Cleopadre (Via Emilio Cuzzocrea 17, 89128 Reggio Calabria, Italy): I am the publisher of a new zine named *Compendio Ars Diplomatica*, which will run games of Diplomacy PBM. The zine is part of AID, which wants to begin work on a World Diplomacy Association (WDA). Our goal is to have at least two zines as part of WDA in each nation where Dip is played. This would form a great international network. The WDA zines would publish info on the other WDA zines, and would respond to requests from other WDA zines concerning setting up international Dip games. My zine CAD is also searching for players for an international Dip game, run in English.

Editor: Well, the WDA is certainly an interesting concept, as a means of facilitating international play. I can testify from experience that the international games I have played in English, German and Australian zines have been a great deal of fun. As you will no doubt discover, the North American hobby does not have such a central gamestart service as the AID, although I understand that the UK did at one time. In our hobby, each zine is totally independent from the others, setting up its own games and selling itself to prospective subscribers. I have no idea which is more efficient, except to say that whatever feels comfortable to the players is probably the way to go. By the way, readers, Davide is particularly interested in variants, so you variant people should drop him a line.

Losers Become Winners in 1905 Action

Things are really getting interesting in the DW Demonstration Game as the game enters and leaves 1905. The purpose of this feature is to "demonstrate" how some of the hobby's top players conduct a Diplomacy game, and to give you insights on Diplomacy play by our two commentators. The editor invites you to share with him your thoughts about the game, the commentary, or any other aspect of the zine. And now, on with the game!

Spring 1905 91AH

Just What in Blue Blazes is the Turk up to?

Austria (Bill Quinn): A Vie r Tri, Removes F Bla and A Rum. A Tyl-Vie, A Tri S A Tyl-Vie, A Bud S A Tyl-Vie, A Ser S A Bud

England (Mike Ward): A Yor-Wal, F Nth S F Lon-Eng, F Lon-Eng, F Lvp-Iri

France (Mark Berch): A Gas-Spa, F Mid S A Gas-Spa, F Eng-Bel (d. bre. otb), A Pic-Par, A Par-Gas

Germany (Mike Gonsalves): A Bur-Pic, A Bel S A Bur-Pic, A Hol S A Bel, A Kie-Mun, A Boh-Tyl

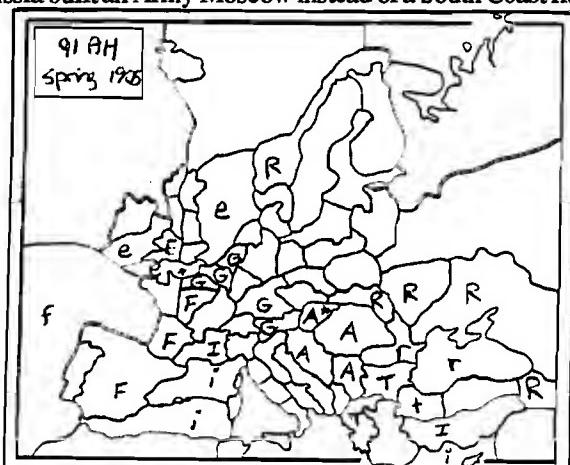
Italy (Randolph Smyth): F Wes-Mid, A Smy S Austrian F Bla-Con(NSU), A Pie-Mar, F Lyo S A Pie-Mar, F Eas S A Smy

Russia (Kevin Kozlowski): Build A Mos, F Bul(ec)-Rum, A Ukr S F Bul-Rum, A Mos-Sev, A Arm S A Mos-Sev, A Gal-Bud, A Nwy H, F Sev-Bla

Turkey (Dave McCrumb): Build A Con, A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con, A Vie S German A Boh-Tyl (d.boh.otb), A Gre-Ser

Commentary:

Garret Schenck: First, how did I do on the predictions? Well, Russia built an Army Moscow instead of a South Coast fleet,



so scratch one. Turkey built an army instead of the fleet I predicted, scratch two. I did alright on Austria, though; I guessed right on both disbands. Heck, two outta four ain't too bad, is it?

Russia's position in this game continues to improve. The English moves indicate a loyal, trusting ally - as do the Turkish moves, where a carefully choreographed ballet brings a second Turkish army back to the Balkans. For next turn I suspect that Russia will move fleets to Ankara and Black, while sticking either A Ukr or A Sev into Rum. (On the other hand, a convoy across the Black Sea is distinctly possible! A second Russian army in Turkey, coupled with a fleet in the Black Sea and the likely Turkish fleet move to the Aegean, leaves Russia with all the cards in the south, and a completely dominating position in the RT alliance. Needless to say, this won't last long, given the way this game has gone, but that's the situation this turn, anyway.)

Still, I think Russia would have been better off biting the bullet and building on the South Coast. Russia can't win the game without pushing up north, and with no German fleets, now is the time to move. With France on the ropes, Germany might get a build soon, or he could get something out of Austria/Italy. Northern Germany lies open to Russo-English attack, but not for long.

I feel E/R would be advised to let France concentrate on Italy. They don't want to see Italy break out into the Med (note the Italian try for MAO this turn!) Why not let France guard the Gibraltar bottleneck, while the two of them munch on a defenseless Germany? Russia has ample armies to keep the center safe, and a resurgent Turkey could go far toward keeping Austria occupied. No country in Diplomacy can afford to sit on their laurels, least of all Russia. Look at how useful that retreating Turkish army would have been if Russia had moved against Germany!

And Russia has to be concerned about all those English fleets. It would be a mistake for England to let a growing Italy (note Marseilles) into the Atlantic, yet if he continues to pressure France from the north, that will be the result. England should be thinking about offering a peace treaty to France, and thinking about other possible targets. There are two: Germany and Russia. Maybe Russia can trust England to "do it on his own", but a Russian fleet in the north would have helped on two counts - by making Russia stronger it deters an attack, since the stab becomes far riskier, and far less profitable; and the Russian fleet in the Baltic is a killer for Germany and can really unhinge any German defense. Finally, in a "balance of power" game like this one, I won't have been the only observer noting Russia's growing power. Surely England will see the RT alliance in the south. With the

French threat diminishing, and no German fleets, England has many more options than just a few turns ago. Kozlowski should be helping to define those options in ways that will benefit him and not Germany. We'll see...

Italy grabs Marseilles, and has a nice attack on Spain as well. But France can hold both Spain and Brest this turn, barring intervention from F Iri. Will England help Italy to take Spain or move into the Atlantic? I've already said that this would not be in England's interest, but given the bad blood between England and France, it could happen.

For the third turn running, Italy was not informed of Austrian plans (or so it seems.) The GM raked this commentator over the coals for suggesting that he offer a Press Gunboat Demo Game, but it appears that some of the players are in fact playing *No-Press Gunboat*. Unless Italy's support for a removed Austrian fleet was shadowplay (maybe Italy just wanted to hold, anyway, since two RT units bore on Smyrna), the other players should be noticing the lack of cooperation between the AI allies. When push comes to shove (and it looks like it's been doing that for several turns now!) this lack of coordination will cost AI dearly. In general the play of Italy and especially Austria has been uninspired of late. The sit-and-hold in Turkey reminds me of a rabbit in the middle of the road staring at oncoming headlights.

The German unit in Tyrolia has several options. It can grab for Venice, daring Austria to cover (if there's no bounce this could lead to "strains" in AI relations), it can attack or support a Turkish attack against Vienna, or it can attack Trieste in order to cut support for Serbia, which would likely give that space to his "pal" Turkey (and might give Germany Trieste if Austria is faked into Venice). The problem is that all of these options hurt Austria. Is this in Germany's interest? With the possible exception of attacking Trieste in order to give Turkey a center, I doubt it. (Giving Turkey Serbia would keep Turkey strong and therefore more likely to buck Russia, regardless of whether luck grants him Trieste.)

This game is quite interesting in that all powers maintain some grip on life. Usually by 1905 one or two countries are either dead or fading fast. If nothing else, the players are putting on a pretty good show. They're certainly keeping us commentators guessing, if not each other!

Fred Townsend: In his introduction to the Winter 1903 moves, our GM explains that he was publishing only the Winter moves because the commentary might "impact on the game itself." How so? It seems that the players have been laughing so hard at the commentary that they had trouble getting their moves in on time. This delaying the Spring moves was just an effort to avoid NMR's...

In the same issue of *Diplomacy World*, Paul Glenn says he has never seen anyone play Balance of Power in a Dip game. Hey, turn to the Demo Game, Paul! Here we are in Spring 1905 after a series of stabs that seemed designed to

ensure that no one power becomes too strong. And it has worked. All seven players have 4-7 centers and, while some are in better positions than others, nobody is out of it yet.

Now Russia, and his two allies England and Germany, are on the verge of breaking out. Russia could pick up both Rum and Ank this turn to go to 9 centers, while England and Germany (along with Italy) are moving in for the kill against France. If I were England or Germany I would only continue like this if Russia would be the odd man out when the alliance breaks up. With possibly two builds and the rear position, Russia already may be too strong.

Turkey, meanwhile, should insist that Russia bounce him to Ank and retreat A Vie off-the-board, so that he can build in Ank next fall. The homeland is essential and Turkish A Boh is much too far away. Indeed, Turkey may be thinking of switching sides again as Russia is now a greater threat to him than AI. Still, if Turkey can pull this game out, he is a Houdini.

Italy can guarantee Mar or can guess to get both Mar and Spa, but if he is going for Spain he should attack from W. Med., as the French fleet in MAO is obviously going to be attacked. France may try F MAO-Wes, attempting to cut support of an attack on Spain. Thus F Wes-Spa, A Mar S, F Lyo either supports the attack or supports Mar in place.

In summary, Russia is in the lead, but if the balance of power theme of this game is to continue Turkey, England and Germany all should soon turn against him.

91AH

Fall 1905

Balkan Centers Really, Really Change Hands

Austria (Quinn): A Tri S A Vie, A Vie S A Tri, A Bud S A Ser, A Ser S A Bud (d.alb.oth)

England (Ward): F Iri S F Eng-Mid, F Eng-Mid, F Nth-Eng, A Wal H

France (Berch): F Eng r Bre, A Par S F Bre, F Bre H, A Gas-Mar, F Mid-Wes (d.naf.nat.por.oth), A Spa S A Gas-Mar



Demo Game

Germany (Gonsalves): A Bel-Bur, A Pic S French A Wal-Bre (NSO), A Mun-Tyl, A Tyl-Vie, A Hol-Ruh

Italy (Smyth): F Lyo-Spa(sc), F Wes S F Lyo-Spa(sc), A Mar S F Lyo-Spa(sc), A Smy H (d.ank.svr.otb), F Eas-Aeg

Russia (Kozlowski): A Arm S Turk F Con-Smy, A Sev-Rum, A Ukr S A Sev-Rum, F Rum-Bla, F Bla-Sev, A Nwy H, A Gal-Bud

Turkey (McCrumb): A Bul S A Gre-Ser, A Gre-Ser, F Con-Smy, A Boh S German A Tyl-Vie

Press:

Germany to Italy: Canadian Post still on strike?

Germany to Austria: Why are you still here?

Germany to GM: As this is a demo game, please take note what is happening to those who never write.

Germany to Austria: Prepare to die, Silent One.

Commentary:

Garret Schenck: Well, the rabbit got out of the road, but apparently the oncoming car swerved at the same time; Italy loses a foothold in Turkey, sort of. Now Russia, who for whatever reason was unwilling to stick another unit into Turkey in 1905, will have to do so in 1906. Otherwise, what? Wait for the Turk fleet to move to Con in order to attack Ank, just to have the Italian army retreat back to Smy again? This is foolish. Instead of wasting timeiddling around with the Rum/Bla/Sev circle dance, Russia should have told Turkey, "look, it we don't stop Italy from retreating to Ank, why are we bothering to attack at all? It's almost like they expected the rabbit to hold with support and didn't expect the attack to succeed."

This game is getting curioser and curioser. One country or faction will have the upper hand for a turn or two, make powerful and exciting moves, and then before you know it they "lose the power" and start churning out sludge. Get it together guys!

Austria is hurting. It's hard to see how he can come back from this one, except through some amazing diplomacy. Since this game has been a real "balance of power" exercise, good solid diplomacy could turn things around. But given Germany's press bashing Austria for playing Gunboat, I suspect that Austria is now the rabbit, resigned to his fate. I have to say that if I were playing Austria right now I'd be plenty depressed, given that Germany, Turkey and Russia all want me dead and are taking steps to achieve that goal. Oh, well...

Why is Germany helping out, though? Okay, maybe Mike Gonsalves wants to kill all "silent wonders", but once Austria goes, where are those Turkish, and especially Russian, armies going to go? Mike should be propping up Austria, not helping to knock him down. On the other hand, if Quinn is refusing to talk or communicate in any way, there may not be much that Mike can do about it, although misor-

dering supports has a long and venerated history in this hobby. At least A Hol-Ruh is a move in the right direction.

France makes a solid move, given the circumstances, and can retreat to Portugal, a veritable fortress that should always be the "final bunker" for any "Atlantic" power. France has a hard choice ahead in disbanding a unit. If England and Italy remain merciless, the lack of that fifth unit will prove deadly in 1906. At this point France's best bet for survival might be to puppet to either England or Italy. With Portugal in hand, I'd say Italy is the best hope, since with England in the Atlantic and Italy in the Med, Portugal can last along time as a buffer state between the two.

So, what the heck, it really doesn't matter which unit France disbands. Spain, Brest and Paris are all forfeit (with the centers going to, respectively, Italy, England and Germany). France's only hope is the Portugal card, and I expect Berch knows how to play it. Diplomacy is needed, now!

I guess England will get to play the role of cork for the Mediterranean. This may limit his other options, especially since he'll only be picking up one center out of France (pretty puny rewards, I think, for the central role he'll play in bringing down Berch). Barring Italian collapse, England will find it difficult to go on any adventures with just a single fleet, army or no army. This helps both Russia and Germany, the two possible targets of future English attack. And if France is allowed to throw in his lot with the Italians, England may have to use all forces just to hold at Gibraltar.

So now we have come to the midgame; a little later than many games, but we're here nonetheless. France is losing quickly, and will probably drop to a single center at the end of next year. Austria has more options, and much depends on how things play out, but Quinn probably will be whittled down to a single center next year, too.

Who comes out of all this in front? Who is helped the least?

Despite Russia's poor moves this year, I still rank him in front, though he could have been running away with it had he been willing to take a risk. England is safe, as it's hard to see how he can be attacked at this point, since Germany and Russia are both a year away from building fleets. Denmark is weak, true, but England should shore that up with his build (F London, moving to North Sea?) A stab of Germany is a distinct possibility with Germany busy killing France, and Holland and Belgium being open. Italy is in a weak position. His ally is about to collapse, and Turkey is about to build another fleet (right, Dave McCrumb?) The Turkish dot is forfeit whenever Russia decides that enough is enough, and barring alliance with Germany, gains beyond Spain don't seem likely. Italy needs to find a mid- to end-game ally, or he'll be dead, sooner rather than later.

Turkey has improved his position the most over the past year or so. From an obvious down and outer, Turkey has the potential to join with Russia in a game-winning alliance. If in

the final analysis this proves to be due to Dave's hard work (and note that he's the one cooperating with two separate powers) then my hat's off to him.

Germany is something of a wild card. My guess is that Mike Gonsalves' dogged determination is keeping him alive for now. But he's very much in the middle. If he spends even one more turn helping attack Austria I'll be surprised and slightly disappointed. He has to realize that RT are endgame enemies of Germany. But who is Germany's ally? That I cannot tell. I am unwilling to believe that the GRT can stick together any longer than it takes to inter the Austrian corpse.

Germany must nail down the English alliance. Nothing else can possibly save him - without fleets he's not a very exciting partner for Russia moving against England. And England now is his biggest short-term threat, since Mike will be forced to leave his backside exposed as he confronts RT. Gonsalves has to pull out all the stops, or he may find the game coming down to RT vs. E, with Germany fodder for foreign armies.

Fred Townsend: The four-way steamroller continues to advance south and west. England takes the MAO, Germany slips into Burgundy, and Turkey regains Smyrna for at least one build. Russia does not build at all, which is probably his best strategy. When you are part of a strong alliance and your allies are moving away, let them have the first centers. Being

greedy and insisting on early gains usually will break up such alliances.

And breaking up the alliance has to be France, Italy and Austria's prime objective. Unless it cracks in 1906, France and Austria will be too weak to have much of a chance (though you never know anything for sure in this game.) Italy has better options. But why Italy did not try to take Spain from W. Med., as suggested here last time, is beyond me. Now he has no build and must rely on Germany guessing wrong again on Venice and on Austria not getting desperate.

This is no time for half-measures. The attack on Turkey has plainly failed and should be liquidated immediately. Italy should retreat A Smy off the board and move F Aeg-Ion. Turkey will be at six, plus two, and with Italy out of his homeland Dave may be willing to fight Russia once more. And Dave should be open to such a suggestion. Where else are those six Russian pieces going to go once Austria folds?

I said Turkey had to be a Houdini to pull this game out. Well, he is picking the locks, slipping through the chains, and pushing on the lid of his coffin. When the smoke on the stage of southern Europe clears, watch out.

>Garret Schenck (40 3rd Pl, Basement, Brooklyn NY 11231) publishes the zines *Upstart* and *Zine Register*, while Fred Townsend (65 Wimbleton Rd, Lake Bluff IL 60044) publishes nothing at all.

"Hey Rocky, watch me pull a rabbit out of a hat!"

Again? Sure, why not? Remember, this will be your last chance to see *Zine Register* the way it was meant to be...Totally Turbo®!

Change is good. Along with a new three-column format, we've added scanned pictures of almost every zine in the hobby, so you can "see before you buy." This makes issue #21 more of a "catalog of zines" than a dry and dusty "dictionary of zines." You can browse through it, drool over your favorite zine(s), or use the descriptions of those you don't care for as toilet paper (hey, that's what they used to do with the Sears & Roebuck catalog, too!) Freedom of choice, as always...

Some things haven't changed, however, as we have numerous "guest reviews" contributed by "the Usual Gang of Idiots," the very latest info on gamestarts, eulogies to recently departed zines (i.e., folds), "sidebars" on many different aspects of the postal games hobby, and more listings of foreign zines than any *Zine Register*.

If you want to receive your very own copy of *Zine Register* #21, be sure to get in line by sending a mere \$2.50 (\$4.00 for overseas buyers) to:

Garret Schenck, 40 3rd Place, Basement Apt., Brooklyn, NY 11231-3302.

North American Zine Bank

Interested in receiving a whole bunch of sample zines, but too lazy to send out 20 or 30 letters or postcards? Why not send \$3.00 (\$6.00 overseas) to Pete Gaughan. He'll send you a NAZB packet containing copies at least 20 sample zines. That's no more than 15¢ per sample—less than a postcard! You can request specific zines, certain kinds of zines (i.e., RR zines or Dip only), or exclude zines you aren't interested in. He'll do his best to give you just what you want, subject to availability.

Pete will be publishing his first *Zine Register* in May 1993. But he's as anxious to start doing the Zine Bank as I am to get rid of it, so he's taking over ZR's companion service starting now. His address: 1521 S. Novato Blvd. #46, Novato, CA 94947-4147.

Diplomacy World Interview with Pete Gaughan

by Phil Reynolds

Pete Gaughan has been an active and integral hobby force for over 10 years. His credits include publishing over 100 issues of the popular zine *Perelandra*, introducing the hobby to Snowball Fighting, running the Marco Poll, co-hosting the 1993 DipCon, and, soon, publishing the *Zine Register*. It is no surprise, then, that *Diplomacy World* was curious to find out more about Pete Gaughan.

DW: Where were you born, and where were you raised?

PG: I was born Peter James Patrick Gaughan IV in Cleveland, Ohio, on January 19, 1961. At age 11, my family moved to La Mirada, California. I was a typical southern California kid in some ways; I worked at an amusement park and I hung out at the beach. But I was a bookworm busy with church activities, so I never learned to surf.

DW: Tell us about your college experience and how you met Cathy.

PG: I graduated summa cum laude and a Phi Beta Kappa from USC in 1983, with a B.A. in Humanities (emphasis on German). After college, I spent a summer teaching English in Japan. Then I moved to Texas to study linguistics at the graduate level. After a couple of years, I dropped out of school to work full-time. I started dating Cathy about this time, and we were married on May 25, 1987.

DW: Why did you return to California?

PG: In 1990, my father's San Francisco business had grown and it needed another salesman, so we moved out to the coast. I work with him selling photographic equipment wholesale.

DW: What are some of your other hobbies besides Diplomacy?

PG: I'm in a couple of academic societies just to keep abreast of things, because I still plan on finishing my master's degree. I am a member of the Sierra Club, the Audobon Society, and the Yosemite Association. I try to spend several hours a week lobbying politicians and educating myself about the environment. Cathy and I attend symphonies, barbershop quartets, and plays, and make trips to the mountains. Last year, I was part of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory's Hawkwatch, which counts hawks as they migrate. This year I'm excited to be working with their banding program which traps and bands birds, taking measurements of weight and size for ornithologists. It's thrilling to hold a wild hawk in my bare hands, seeing it eye-to-eye, and lifting the bird into the air on release!

DW: What were your first experiences with the PBM Dip hobby?

PG: I was a Mensa member as a college freshman, and I got information about Fred Davis' Mensa Dip group. He referred me to Ron Brown's *Snaful!* My first gamestart was when I first saw Diplomacy. I was eliminated in 1902, and my last order was F Pic-Par! The first zines I joined—*Snaful!*, *jihad!*, *Xenogogic*—attracted me with their mix of politics, personal life, philosophy, and games. I began to feel like I had some friends in the hobby.

DW: What has been your experience as a player?

PG: I've played in 27 games, which include one win, four draws, and six survivals. The win was from a game where I came in as a standby in 1903 and was given my ally's centers in 1922! So, at best, I'm an average player. With all of my Dip commitments, I'm restricting myself to four games at a time now.

DW: How are the plans for next year's DipCon going?

PG: Don Del Grande and I will be hosting DipCon XXVI at Pacificon 1993. I'll be publishing a newsletter called *Dip Conversation* to discuss plans. The Bay Area postal gamers are getting excited about DipCon coming here!

DW: Can you explain your great interest in gaming conventions?

PG: I want to meet all these fascinating folks I hear from. I've served on three DipCon committees and attended two other DipCons, and I've made a point of hosting a small con at my house about a dozen times.

DW: Should DipCon be held with larger cons routinely?

PG: I think it's necessary on a regular basis. I don't think DipCon draws very many new players into the postal hobby. However, We get a different and much-needed experience from meeting by ourselves.

DW: Did you ever think you would publish 100 issues of *Perelandra*, and how did you manage to do this?

PG: Yes, actually. When I started *Perelandra*, my goal was to get to the 100th issue. I've never experienced burnout from publishing or the hobby. I'm proud of doing unique things in my zine. I have kept a neutral tone in feuds and readers have been attracted to this. I focused on literature because I liked it, despite comments originally that this was too narrow of an interest. I had a small zine when I wanted it to be small, and I had a big zine when I wanted it to be big. Not once did I tell someone they had to be like me.

DW: Why did you become so fascinated with Snowball Fighting?

PG: I saw the potential right away. It was yet another thing I could do to make my zine different from the others. I thought Snowball Fighting would catch on quicker around the hobby, however. It is a game with just enough strategy to warrant pride in winning while encouraging press and role-playing.

DW: How long will you keep publishing *Perelandra*?

PG: I'll publish *Perelandra* throughout 1993—probably longer, to issue #200, but no promises. The zine will evolve as I try to become a writer touching on the real world as well as Dipdom. It makes a great experimental lab for what's going on in my life.

DW: Do you have any thoughts or advice for novice publishers?

PG: Start small! Young publishers are eager to make a big impres-

sion, but when you start a zine, I believe you have to choose between the size of the initial impact and the stamina of the zine. Those of us who have been around for ten years didn't worry about getting seven games or fifteen pages in the third issue. If you take to publishing like a fish to water, then expand. But when you start, you have no idea what obstacles will crop up. Be patient! We need you to survive past issue #3, and preferably past issue #50!

DW: How did you come to do the Marco Poll, and what do you perceive to be its relationship to the Runestone Poll?

PG: Mark Larzelere began the Marco Poll as an alternative for those who felt the Runestone Poll was too critical and damaging to some zines. I revived it in 1989. There are several good reasons for continuing the Marco Poll, although I support the Runestone Poll. First, the MP gives an earlier view, polling in January and February. Second, there's less apparatus in the MP, for those who feel the RP has become too high-tech and mathematical. Third, the MP has a category for players, which the RP does not, and starting next year the MP will run a freshman zine category. Finally, the Marco Poll is a forum for those who feel the Runestone Poll discourages some zines.

DW: What does *Perelandra*'s #1 ranking in the Runestone Poll mean to you?

PG: It means, "You like me! You really like me!"

DW: Do you think we place too much emphasis on polls and awards?

PG: I think the different polls and awards have to be addressed individually. There is nothing inherently wrong with awarding honors to those who have achieved something or served others. But some awards are taken too seriously, and some are simply dumb—the award for quantity hobby participation, for example. I really hope the Rusty Bolts Awards gain popularity, because they have the kind of light-hearted tone which any competitive hobby needs to stay healthy.

DW: What made you decide to become the next *Zine Register* publisher, and what changes do you expect to make?

PG: I've never wanted the job very much, but I feel I can repay the hobby. Call it duty or responsibility. Besides, I enjoy publishing. Garret and I have talked about me becoming editor ever since he took over from Tom Nash, although we both thought Garret would be the editor for a longer time. I'll return to an open page format and add both some indexing features and a small discussion column. For now, I'll keep to the schedule of ZR #22 in May 1993 and ZR #23 in November. My time frame extends until at least 1994, but I may want to keep going after that. Assuming the reviewers keep up the good work, I think nobody will need to worry about the *Zine Register*!

DW: Recently, John Caruso published the PDO *Zine Directory* as an alternative to the *Zine Register*. What do you think of this?

PG: I don't think we need multiple zine registries. No matter who edits the *Zine Register*, I think the PDO *Zine Directory* is a waste of time. John and his readers can do what they want, but I hate to see another petty MNC-MNCuc-like confusion arise.

DW: What are your thoughts on the Turbofreaks issue?

PG: This is different from previous feuds, which were mostly

personal. Even the hobby organizations' fights of the early 1970's were between cliques of hobbyists with different personalities. The Turbofreak argument is like science fiction fandom's eternal fight of FIAWOL vs. FIJAGDH—or, Fandom Is A Way of Life vs. Fandom Is Just A God-Damned Hobby. The FIAWOLers (the Turbofreaks, but no publisher likes to be labelled as such) want bigger, faster, more complex hobby experiences, whether zines or polls or games. We do need this energy to keep driving the hobby forward into new areas, but without the FIJAGDHers we would never get to know each other, joke around, and consider non-gaming topics. The two groups are the yin and yang of a healthy hobby. Let them bicker. I hope the Turbofreaks keep nudging us towards excellence, and I hope the fannish Dipsters keep prodding for casual and friendly ways to chat.

DW: Is there a negative aspect of the hobby which bothers you?

PG: The thing I like least is the way people take sides in a fight. It's natural for people to argue and get personally insulting at times—we can't avoid individual feuds—but it never helps when bystanders jump in to defend or attack the participants. But then I'm a wimpy, tree-hugging bookworm!

DW: With what other hobby services have you been involved?

PG: When *Perelandra* was young, I was single and quite low-key in the hobby. I started the Hobby Small-Fry Protection League, a semi-farcical group for small zines or those running a couple of games. This, the Marco Poll, and the International Subscription Exchange help people interact and have fun without being terribly serious.

DW: What will you be doing in the hobby's near future?

PG: One project I hope to expand is the International Subscription Exchange, which will be helped by its ties to the *Zine Register*. There are many opinions on international contact, and I hope to sway a few of the nonbelievers to try it! After running the Marco Poll this spring, I'll look for a new person to take over that job. We have to keep bringing new Dipsters into leadership and service positions for a fresh approach. DipCon and the ZR will keep me busy, too. Then I'll probably retreat back to *Perelandra* for a while.

DW: What keeps you in this hobby after so many years?

PG: I enjoy publishing, which is a hobby in itself. I've worked on newspapers, newsletters, and other projects. There's a kick that comes from putting words on a page which other people are going to read.

I like Diplomacy, even if I'm not yet an expert. I also enjoy the role-playing which subscribers can do in amateur zines. In *Graustark*, I was the resident evangelical; in *jihad!*, I could be a loudmouthed radical; in *Xenogogic*, I learned to be a good toady. It seems to me good zines let you be different aspects of yourself, and that has kept me in the hobby all these years. That was what made *Magus* so special—you could be frivolous and silly and sarcastic, but it was OK to be serious sometimes when you needed a family around you. I look forward to finding out who will be the next Dipster to be my friend!

►Phil Reynolds (USF#4286, 4202 Fowler Av., Tampa, FL 33620) is the Interview Editor of *Diplomacy World*. Phil publishes both *Dipadeedoodah!* and *Pontevendia*.

Fourth World Zine Poll: 1992

by Mark Nelson

This is the fourth of a series of annual zine listings produced by Mark Nelson. The purpose of this is to list what I believe to be the top ten zines in the world during a particular year. In last year's listing I commented that there were several zines that could make it into the 1992 listing:

"Zines to look out for next year include *Been There, Done That* if Tom Nash can produce it on a regular basis. David Hood's revamped *Diplomacy World* has an outside chance to scrape in if he can make the zine more lively and varied in content. The German *Europa 2000* has a chance with its wide range of letterwriters, although it may be too game-heavy to impress me that much. Finally, Harry Bond's *U-Bend* has a glittering future provided it can be produced on a regular basis..."

Have any of these potential wonder zines made the grade and moved from also-ran to inclusion in the listing proper? Let's take a see at what's happened over the last 18 months...

Tom Nash folded and left the American hobby after becoming disillusioned with the trend towards turbophreakism, his final issues containing some brutal Hobby commentary. *Europa 2000* has been mostly warehouse issues this year. *U-Bend* has been the most disappointing zine in years. There is a rare moment of brilliance but the only reputation the zine has established is one for shoddy, second-class gming.

Of last year's list, five zines have dropped from my list.

The 1993 Marco Poll

Your Chance to Reward the Best!

In each category, you may list up to five choices.
List your choices in order from #1 (favorite) to #5 (fifth-favorite).

Best Zine of 1992
Best Player of 1992
Freshman Zine of 1992

Restrictions: *Perelandra* is not eligible for Best Zine, and Gary Behnen is not eligible for Best Player. A Freshman Zine is any zine whose first three issues came out in 1992. This includes but is not limited to the following: *36 Miles of Trouble*, *Zero Sum*, *iGOL!*, *Loco Motives*, *Foolhardy*, *Pennant Madness*, *Election HeadQuarters*, *Aren't You the Guy Who Hit Me In the Eye?*, *Metamorphosis* and *Rainbow Warrior*. (For the purpose of the Freshman Zine Poll, *Call Me President*, *Making Love in a Canoe*, *Wild Gypsy Rose*, *off-the-shelf* and *Standard Gauge* will be considered 1993 start-ups.)

Send ballots, **before May 1**, to:

Pete Gaughan
1521 South Novato Blvd. #46
Novato, Calif. 94947

I haven't seen an issue of the excellent American zine *Penguin Dip* this year so I've reluctantly removed it from my list. Steve Doubleday's favorite diplomacy zine *FTT* has produced two issues since my last listing but seems to have lost its spark of interest. Whatever merit *Electric Monk* had in previous years (and I believe that at one long-forgotten moment this was an interesting zine) it has deteriorated rapidly. It seems impossible that the Bears could produce a more mediocre, less interesting zine but issue after issue, deadline after deadline, they manage to do it. *Gallimaufry* remains the same as ever, which is almost all that needs to be said: as ever the potential is there, but it remains potential.

Finally, there is *Variants and Uncles*. At the time I first made up this list, the typical issue was appallingly reproduced and seemed to be mostly to be made up of newspaper clippings. Since then the zine has improved considerably, and on current form will be a contender for next year's listing. When it's good it's good, but when it's bad... it's dreadful.

Zines which I considered including in my top ten include the aforementioned *Variants and Uncles*, the Canadian zine *Excelsior*, and the American *Maniac's Paradise*. All have good chances to be included in next year's listing. But on to the Top Ten!

10. *Diplomacy World* (David Hood, 2905 20th St NE, Hickory NC 28601, USA) Sercon and proud of it, *Diplomacy World* has been turned around by David Hood. If your idea of Mecca is a zine printing articles on Diplomacy, articles on variants, and then a few more articles on Diplomacy with a demo game, hobby news and a cuddly toy through in then this is the zine for you. David also realizes that there is more to the Diplomacy hobby than the game and its variants, and as the "flagship" of the North American hobby, *Diplomacy World* should, and does, recognize this: recent issues have contained articles explaining some of the different types of games played postally other than Diplomacy.

9. *Dolchstoss* (Richard Sharp, Norton House, Whielden St, Amersham, Bucks. HP7 0HU, England) This remains one of the best zines to play Diplomacy in, and if you want to play in an international game then this zine is particularly recommended. Aside from Diplomacy, *Dolchstoss* remains one of the best-written and most interesting of all zines. Over the past year Sharp has provided a succession of different pieces of hobby trivia; the only hobby-related items to be seen in the zine. Winner of the Zine Poll in 1992, and if Sharp wants to

win it in 1993 he will do so.

8. *Stet* (Leah Zeldes Smith, 17 Kerry Ln, Wheeling IL 60090, USA) There has been a SF zine on each of my Top Tens since 1990. Issue 5 was a magnificent 96-page multi-colored mimeo production. Although it contains a number of excellent articles, the meat of the zine is the 54-page letter column. An SF equivalent to *Foolhardy*? That isn't quite true, but much of the letter column discussion here wouldn't be out of place in *Foolhardy*.

7. *Y Ddraig Goch* (Iain Bowen, 5 Wigginton Terrace, York. YO3 7JD, England) Most knowledgeable fanzine critics agreed that, with second place, *Y Ddraig Goch* was overrated in the 1992 Zine Poll. And this year Iain Bowen has even gone so far as ask his readers to give him a lower vote than in last year's poll, as he doesn't think he has produced as good a zine this year as last. This may be the case (though I think not). Nevertheless, *YDG* is one of the best zines pubbed in the UK. A reasonable lettercolumn (though not as good as one would expect), excellent hobby news, and Iain's own editorials. No longer the angry young man, but the cynical hobby hack.

6. *Lepanto 4-Ever* (Per Westling, c/o Lindh, Drabantgatan 11, S-58346, Linkoping, Sweden) The Swedish *Victorianna*? An interesting comparison. *Lepanto 4-Ever* contains a strong, Diplomacy-oriented letter column and runs numer-

ous articles on Diplomacy and variants. There is a strong non-Swedish presence to the zine and it is a very easy "first international zine" for someone to step into.

5. *Victorianna* (John Cain, 76 Banool Rd, Balwyn 3103, Australia) 1992 was the year John decided to run this zine down, after fifty excellent issues. Although in its early days it was a *Beowulf* clone, John quickly established his own identity. Regular as clockwork, this zine managed to cater to both the local and international markets, and the lettercol regularly contained contributions from numerous overseas types. The Australian hobby has always been small and cliquey, difficult for an outsider to understand. *Victorianna* was the only Australian zine to try to overcome this image, and was the main representative of the Australian hobby on the world scene. The only Australian zine which seems interested in taking over its role is *Popular Cutlery*. We'll have to await developments.

4. *Nertz* (William Whyte, 107 Windmill Rd, Oxford OX3 7BT, England) This is the most variable zine in the Top Ten. Periods of periodicity are separated by sporadic regimes of intermittent behavior. We seem to have no ability to predict when this bifurcation will occur. Similarly, the content of the zine is quite variable. It can be good, or uninspiring. On the whole the last year has been good, at least post-ManorCon. If you've never seen the zine then you should do so, but it's very

New Blood

The following people have recently made inquiries concerning postal Diplomacy, or are known to the editor as being interested in receiving samples of zines. So, you publishers get busy!

Brian DeLaurentis, 235 W 48th St #41E, New York NY 10036
 Michael McFadden, PSC 02 Box 2774, APO AA 34002
 David Kovar, 164 Waverley St, Belmont MA 02178
 Gabe Dambaugh, 220 Calhoun St #5, Clemson SC 29631
 David Smith, 5038 Boca Raton, Garland TX 75043
 Gary Arkoff, 9050 SW Scholls Ferry Rd #301, Tigard OR 97223
 Mike Allen, 100 Hebride Ct, Cary NC 27513
 Paul Woods, 12827-306 Meadow Creek Ln, Pineville NC 28134
 Jonathan Williard, 319 Centre Ave #128, Rockland MA 02370
 Ronald Diebel, 9000 E Jefferson Ave #2217, Detroit MI 48214
 John Plotkin, HHC 99th ASG-NBG, Unit 27933, APO AE 09222
 Davide Cleopadre, via Emilio Cuzzocrea 17, 89128 Reggio Calabria, Italy

Game Openings

Maniac's Paradise, Doug Kent, 54 W Cherry St #211, Rahway NJ 07065 (Diplomacy, Balkan Wars VI)
Zero Sum, Richard Weiss, 554 Liberty St, San Francisco CA 94114 (Diplomacy, Gunboat, Perestroika, Fog of War)
Dipadeedoodah, Phil Reynolds, USF #4286, 4202 Fowler Ave, Tampa FL 33620 (Toxic Dip)
Carolina Command & Commentary, Michael Lowrey, 3005 Kenninghall Ct, Charlotte NC 28269 (Dune, Destroyer Cpt, Dip)
Metamorphosis, David Wang, 701 Hickory Hill Dr, Nicholasville KY 40356 (Dip, Gunboat, Cabinet Dip, Snowball Fighting)
Rebel, Melinda Holley, PO Box 2793, Huntington WV 25727 (Diplomacy, Gunboat)
The Home Office, Fred Hyatt, 60 Grandview Pl, Montclair NJ 07043 (Diplomacy)
Rambling Way, Andy York, PO Box 2307, Universal City TX 78148 (Dip, International Dip, Gunboat)
Heroes of Olympus, Steve Nicewarner, 1310-11 Ephesus Ch Rd, Chapel Hill NC 27514 (United, Empires of the Middle Ages)
Crimson Sky, Michael Gonsavles, 530 Treasure Lake, Dubois PA 15801 (Diplomacy)
The Tactful Assassin, Eric Young, 4784 Stepney Rd RR2, Armstrong B.C. V0E 1B0 (Diplomacy, Asian Dip, Gunboat)
Perelandra, Pete Gaughan, 1521 S Novato Blvd #46, Novato CA 94947 (Snowball Fighting, Railway Rivals, Battleship)

International

much the kind you either like or dislike intensely. This is very much reflected in the Zine Poll results, where the zine has been low from 1985 on, except in 1990 when it mysteriously won the Poll. Ultimately *Nertz* suffers from poor quality of reproduction and the varying formats in which the zine has been produced.

3. *Greatest Hits* (Pete Birks, 181 Friern Rd, East Dulwich, London SE22 0BD, England) No games. No waiting lists. And no issues since ManorCon... Hobby News? Yes! Letter column? Yes! Editorial? Yes! This has been in every Zine Poll since 1975 and holds the British All Comers Award For Most Wins: 1979-81 and 1983. After a period of production between 1986 and 1991 when it seems that Pete was producing the zine on auto-pilot, it reached fourth position in the 1992 Poll, at which point people complained that although it contains more hobby news than 90% of Diplomacy zines it wasn't a Diplomacy zine because it didn't run Diplomacy. In the end it didn't matter - this is an excellent zine.

2. *Foolhardy* (Doug Kent, 54 W Cherry St #211, Rahway NJ 07065, USA) Dick and Julie Martin's *House of Lords* was the first overseas zine that I contributed to and is one of my all-time favorites. When it folded it left a gap in the North American hobby. But from its ashes rose a new zine, Doug Kent's *Foolhardy*. This contains many of the *HoL*

contributors (along with some new faces) and is run in a similar manner. It is a zine that appears quarterly. You want to discuss a topic? Send in a letter and wait for the sparks to fly. Current topics of discussion include the role and value of Diplomacy organizations, the influence of laser printers and dtp on publishing, why there are few novices entering the hobby, how to run the *Zine Register*, and much more. Many of the topics should be of interest to non-North Americans and the zine provides an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas between hobby members.

1. *Northern Flame* (Cal White, 1 Turnberry Ave, Toronto Ontario M6N 1P6, Canada) *Northern Flame* won the Runestone Poll in 1990 and 1991 but couldn't make three in a row. It came out top of my Top Ten list last year and this year, so perhaps he can go for three in a row here! Here there is an excellent letter column, laid-back editorials by a laid-back editor, and some excellent columns contributed by outside writers. This zine has a heavy overseas presence and contains regular contributions from a number of Brits. There is variety in the contributor and in the topics discussed. With so much emphasis being placed on the letter column, this is a letter-hack's dream zine!

>Mark Nelson (21 Cecil Mount, Armley, Leeds, West Riding LS12 2AP, England) publishes the zine *The Mark Nelson Experience*.

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